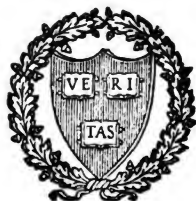


22.457.34.5

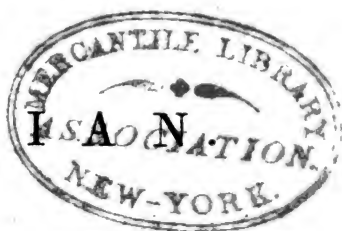
Harvard College Library



FROM THE FUND GIVEN
IN HONOR OF
CHESTER NOYES GREENOUGH
DEAN OF HARVARD COLLEGE
1921-1927

THE

M A G I C I A N



BY

LEITCH RITCHIE.

TWO VOLUMES.

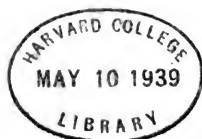
VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

1836.

22457.34.5



Greenough Fund

4

51.12
39-2

TO

MY BROTHER JOHN

I DEDICATE THESE VOLUMES,

LEITCH RITCHIE.



THE MAGICIAN.



CHAPTER I.

IN the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and thirty-seven, the famous city of Paris presented the spectacle of a royal entry far more interesting than the usual pomp of kings. For fifteen years before, a stranger had sat on the throne of France. For fifteen years, the foot of an English monarch had been on the neck of the French people; and Henry V., with the usual insolence of a conqueror, instead of humouring the writhings of his prostrate enemy, had only trode the fiercer at every throe. But the spirit of the nation was now fairly re-awakened. Heaven itself had fought on her side; and by signs and portents, and miracles, rendered holy the cause of Liberty. The apostle, and martyr, of the new revolution, was not a warrior, but a woman; not the scion of royalty, but a peasant girl. The mission of this illustrious Virgin was now fulfilled; the French people had risen up like a strong man from slumber; their enemies had been swept out of the metropolis; and, on the day on which our narrative commences, their wandering Prince, crowned with the diadem of his ancestors, was about to enter in triumph the gates of Paris.

Among the vast multitudes that rolled like a torrent through the streets, there was a single individual, who, although in some slight measure connected with the business of the scene, appeared, like ourselves, to be nothing more than an idle spectator. This was a young Scottish knight, who belonged to a party which had been sent forward to announce the coming of the king, but who had now, with the curiosity of a stranger, and the love of foreign sights inherent in his nation, sallied forth alone to engulf himself in the crowd. He had lately

fought, in the breaches of Montereau, against his ancestral enemies, the English; and a little earlier had pranced through the city of Tours, in the train of the princess Margaret of Scotland, who had gone thither to wed the boy-dauphin: but never before had he beheld, or even imagined, so much splendour and confusion on so vast a scale.

As he elbowed his way from the island called the Cité, which formed the central portion of Paris, towards the wilderness of houses and palaces on the right bank of the river, he paused in astonishment on gaining the middle of the bridge to look around upon the scene—it was the Pont-aux-Changeurs. Behind him, after his eye had traversed the Cité, the visible horizon was formed by the thousand dark roofs of the University; and before, at the end of the bridge, his passage seemed to be barred by the stern towers of the Chatelet, although surmounting and surrounding these, the turrets of almost innumerable palaces attracted, irresistibly, the curiosity. On either side the view was shut in by the ranges of shops and houses which lined the bridge like a parapet; and if sometimes an opening afforded a peep beyond, another bridge loaded in like manner, was seen at a few hundred paces distance.

The first thought of the stranger was of the enormous number of human beings which this densely packed mass of dwellings must contain.

“In God’s name, messire,” said he to a passer-by, “how many may there be of you here?”

“The first city in Europe,” replied the bourgeois, pompously, “reckons within her walls three hundred thousand souls.” The Scot stared in astonishment.

“Then, by our Lady’s might,” said he, “there are enough of you to eat up all Perth at one meal!—that is, if we would let you.”

“I doubt,” rejoined the citizen, “whether the capital of Scotland could afford us even a single meal; else why do so many hungry mouths cross the ocean almost daily, to eat and drink at the cost of France?”

“Because they are bidden,” replied the Scot, lowering his voice, and compressing his lips, like a man who would not lose his temper. “If France could fight her own battles, there would be no need of our Scottish spears. But away! you are only a peddling churl, for all your embroidered doublet; and to-morrow I shall see you in the depths of some dusky

warehouse, haggling for deniers, in a dress of serge and leather!"

"I am an *echevin* of the town!" cried the insulted dignitary.

"Were you the *prevôt* himself, I say you are only a peddling churl!"

"Masters, will you hear this?" said the *echevin*, turning to the crowd, some of whom had stopped to listen to the dialogue; "do you see my badge? Be there none here who follow the banner of Saint Luce?" But most of those whom he addressed walked away out of the row, and not a few of the others laughed outright. As for the Scot, whom the name of the banner had informed that his antagonist was a member of the *confrérie* of tailors, he turned indignantly away; and the inhospitable *echevin*, alternately appealing to the passers-by, and tugging at his unwilling sword, was soon left behind.

The young knight pursued his way, rather less disposed to admire than before this adventure. The Chatelet, however, through the arch-way of which he passed, although no longer the Roman tower of Julian the apostate, appeared to him to be a fortress of incomparable beauty as well as strength; and the immense line of the Rue Saint Denis beyond, although he had heard that the Rue Saint Martin was still wealthier, seemed to contain in its countless shops and warehouses the riches of a whole kingdom. But every thing on this day had an aspect peculiar to the occasion. The street was hung in its whole length with canopies of rich cloth and carpeting, and here and there stages were erected for the performance of music, shows, and mysteries. The members of the different *confréries* of trades were seen hurrying along to their rendezvous, gorgeously dressed, and bearing the banners of their patron-saints; while justling these, successive groups of minstrels, jugglers, players, and above all, devils, hooped and horned, elbowed their way to their various posts.

Nor were the women wanting in the spectacle. The caps alone of the ladies, made in the form of a sugar loaf, half an ell high, from the peak of which a white veil flowed forth, and descended to the feet, would have made them sufficiently remarkable; but the effect of this portion of the dress was heightened by the fantastic richness of the rest. They wore, no longer, indeed, the arms of their husbands emblazoned on

their gowns; nor did their garments, like those of their great grandmothers, in the fashion of the open tunics of the Spartan girls, display their naked sides: but gold and silver, satin and velvet, combined to furnish figures calculated to adorn the festival of the gayest prince in Christendom.

Among the vast crowd of strange figures and costumes, the knight was surprised to find none belonging to the Hebrew nation. He did not know, or had forgotten, that, although still spreading its branches in other parts of Europe, the tree of Judah was not only cut down in France, but rooted up out of the soil. The Jews, in fact, had been banished so strictly from this most Christian kingdom, by an edict of the last prince, that if one of them had been found to-day among that multitude of his fellow-creatures, he would in all probability have been burnt alive.

But, mingling with the peculiarities of the day, the common business of life went on as usual; and the stranger was almost stunned with the thousand discordant noises of a Parisian morning. Every article in daily use, from a roasted goose to a tallow-candle, had its crier; and every crier vied with his neighbours as to who should bawl the loudest. The commissioners of the baths were flying about informing the public that their water was hot, and, looking eagerly into the face of the passer-by, shouted, "Make haste! make haste!" The venders of wine were clamorously inviting the crowd to taste; the restaurateurs tempting the appetite with a catalogue of their meats; and in the midst of all, some men in black issuing from the houses, or the cross streets, ringing a mournful bell, called upon all who heard them to pray for the souls of the dead.

The number of beggars, especially, was so great, and their endless litanies so loud, that they might almost be said to give the prevailing character to the scene. Besides the common poor who go to and fro upon the earth to this day with artificial wounds and stories of imaginary distress, there were shoals of vagabonds calling themselves Bohemians, distinguished from the rest by their shorn heads—so despoiled by the mandage of government. A still greater number of bald crowns belonged to the various orders of mendicant monks; and these were farther distinguished by the chin as well as the scalp being destitute of hair. The most remarkable of this class were the Jacobins, a colony of Dominicans, so called from officiating in the chapel of St. Jacques. One of these

flogged St. Louis to his heart's content in the quality of his confessor; another assassinated Henri III.; and another canonized the assassin: but notwithstanding this illustrious fortune, they all begged in the streets of Paris. Then came the cordeliers, so celebrated for their dissolute manners; and then the Grands Augustins, the Celestines, the Carthusians; while, jostled by these bold and libertine monks, some bands of Beguines, and Sœurs Sachettes, raised here and there their shrill voices among the crowd.

All these, however, were beggars by profession, and excited therefore but little of the knight's pity, although they drew some small coins from his pocket; but it was with a start of surprise and concern that he saw, mingling with the clamorous crowd, and crying like the others for bread, some students of the university, habited in their black gowns and cowls. This common spectacle appeared extraordinary to him; for the university was associated in his mind only with ideas of power, and grandeur, and the most prodigious audacity. But this was the university as a body; this was the rector, the advocates, the regents of the colleges: he had now to learn how happily the students united to their clerical character that of the ruffian and the mendicant. The spirits of the Scot were depressed, as he thought how many high-minded, chivalrous adventurers had left and were still leaving his own country, to pursue the path of honour and fortune at this famous seminary; and in particular a cloud settled upon his brow as he speculated upon the fate of an early friend, whom it was to be his business that evening to seek out in the city of colleges, on the left bank of the river.

On approaching the end of the street, which was terminated by the gate of St. Denis, on the same spot which it occupies to-day, the crowd became so dense, that sometimes a halt of several minutes at a time took place in the moving mass. On such occasions the principal confusion was occasioned by the valets, who enjoyed the reputation of being, next to the students, the greatest blackguards in Paris. So obnoxious, in fact, had they become to the authorities, that those who were out of place were forced to quit the city instantly, if they could not find some respectable person to become responsible for their conduct. Their costume was as various as that of their descendants of the present day; but many wore only a single sleeve of their master's livery. On the present occasion their delinquencies were confined to certain manual

jokes played upon the lower class of women, and some less innocent conversations which they held with the speaking birds, hung out almost at every window. And in these household favourites of the Parisians of the age, it must be said, they met with their match. Leading the public life they did, in which they were exposed to every sort of society, the natural morality of the birds was so far lost, that they had become fluent in every term of insult and indecency; and thunders of laughter were elicited among the crowd by the aptness of their repartees.

When the Scottish knight at length reached the gate of St. Denis, a scene took place which formed a strange prelude to the approaching ceremony. In those days the English were not the only ravagers of France. Famine, as usual, had followed the steps of protracted war; and troops of starved wolves, unable to live in their forests, came prowling, not only to the gates, but in the very streets of Paris. Women as well as children, if we may believe contemporary authors, were in some instances killed by these hungry and ferocious beasts; and not a few of the more daring citizens went forth to combat the destroyer, in the same chivalrous spirit which inspired the heroes of the romancers, in their duels with giants and dragons.

At this moment a slain wolf of extraordinary size was brought in, as a trophy, by a party of these adventurers; and when the cortege reached the gate, in order to give greater effect to the exhibition, the tremendous brute was raised upon his legs, with his dead eyes and dripping jaws directed towards the street. The spectacle was hailed by the rabble with a universal shout; but the noise died away with unusual suddenness. It seemed as if the show had been taken as an evil augury; and this strange avant-courier of a monarch was ordered to make his entrance by another avenue. The wolf-hunters, however, were now anxious to become the spectators of a new and more splendid pageant; and the gaunt carcase was thrown down by the way-side, to remain till the living hero of the day had passed by. The incident was called to mind soon after, when the burdens which the necessities of Charles VII. compelled him to impose, were characterized by the selfishness of the Parisians, not as the demands of a lawful king, but as the ravages of a wolf.

The whole of the space at the porte St. Denis, was taken up by the authorities of the city, lining each side of the way,

with those in the middle appointed to receive the king. Above the gate was hung a shield, with the representation of France supported by three angels, and the following inscription :—

Tres excellent roy et seigneur,
Les manans de votre cité
Vous reçoient en tout honneur,
Et en tres grande humilité.

The ground was kept by the arbalatriers and archers of the town, arrayed in coats of arms; which, being of the livery colours of the city, red and blue, gave them the appearance of wearing a uniform, although this improvement in the dress of soldiers is of much more modern introduction.

The approaching cortege, which had been some time in sight, at length gradually reached the ground; and file after file, as they arrived, took up their position on either side of the way, till king Charles himself was seen through the long vista, approaching slowly and majestically, seated on a white horse, the emblem of royalty. At this sight the breath of the vast multitude, hitherto pent up, as it were, by curiosity and expectation, found simultaneous utterance, and the cry of "Noel! Noel!" burst from every lip. The expression is a contraction of *Emanuel*, "Lord be with us!" and was used at that time as a cry of joy by the French people, instead of "Vive le Roi!" It was echoed from mouth to mouth, from street to street. The women and children in the most distant quarters of the metropolis gave back the sound; the sick and the dying put aside their curtains, to gaze towards the window, and swell the shout with their feeble voices; the clock-towers of every church in the city gave forth at the signal a joyful peal; and even the great bell of the palace, whose hammer stirred only on extraordinary occasions, rang "Noel! Noel!"

On the approach of the king, the prévôt of the merchants—for the prévôt of Paris was a royal and not a municipal officer—presented the keys of the city; while a canopy of violet-coloured velvet was held by the echevins (answering in some respects to our aldermen,) over the royal head. The city dignitaries then marshalled the way of their master into his metropolis.

The prévôt of Paris was attended by his servants on foot

in great numbers, each wearing a green and red hood; and after these came a long line of notaries, procureurs, commissioners, advocates, and counsellors, followed by the lieutenant and guard of the governor, or, as he was termed in the grandiloquence of the age, the *king* of the Chatelet.

After this civic cortege, there followed one of a more extraordinary nature, or at least, one that few would have looked for in the triumphant march of a king. It consisted of Faith, Hope, Charity, Justice, Prudence, Courage, and Temperance, all on horseback, and all sumptuously dressed in character. Together with these, however, perhaps to redeem in some measure the inconsistency, the Seven Deadly Sins came plunging on in terrible array. Treading on the heels of the latter, the gentlemen of the Parliament and Requests then made their appearance, attired in red robes; and after them, a body of eight hundred archers, led on by the Count d'Angouleme, a Prince of the blood, of the house of Orleans.

Montjoye, king of arms, came next; a grave and august personage, shrouded in an immense robe of violet-coloured velvet, studded all over with golden fleurs-de-lys, and large pearls. After him rode the Grand Esquire, carrying the royal helmet, which was closed with a double fleur-de-lys of gold. So sumptuously were this personage and his horse arrayed, that he might have been mistaken for the hero of the scene himself; but following next in order appeared the white steed, which, in the processions of that age, denoted the royal rank of the rider. This superb animal was covered with velvet housings of celestial blue, planted with golden fleurs-de-lys, and trailing to the ground. His forehead was covered with a plate of polished steel, and surmounted by a magnificent plume of ostrich feathers.

Nor was the rider unworthy of the steed. Whatever may have been the defects of Charles's person, none were visible on the present occasion. The disproportionate shortness of his legs, which caused him, it is said, to introduce the fashion of long garments, was now hidden by his dress; and his lofty and soldier-like bearing, at a moment like this, so full of pride and triumph, partook, no doubt, still more than usual of a graceful haughtiness. Clothed in gilded armour, with a rich coat of arms over the cuirass, and shaking to the motion of his steed a cord of glittering gems, which hung upon his hat, onward pranced the hero of the day, bowing

and smiling to the enthusiastic greetings of his people, and looking "every inch a king."

After the principal personage had passed by, the interest of the Scottish stranger seemed to increase rather than diminish; and he gazed at the next in order with an earnest and critical eye. This was a young lad of fourteen, armed, dressed, and mounted in all respects like Charles himself. It was the dauphin, the *husband* of the Princess of Scotland; of that beautiful, amiable, sensitive little girl of eleven years, whom the knight had assisted in transplanting from her native home at so early an age. The spectator sighed, and shook his head, as he had often done before, on perusing the features of the boy; and the gloom that settled on his brow told how deeply he regretted that the royal Scott had not matched his daughter in her own country.

The knight followed the young dauphin with his eye, till the pages of both king and prince, coming closely after, intercepted his view. The Bastard of Orleans then appeared, armed from head to heel, and both himself and horse blazing with jewels. This splendid warrior led on the "battle" of the king, consisting of a thousand lances, all armed to the teeth, both man and horse. The long array was closed by an Esquire of the Stable, bearing a vermilion lance, spangled with gold stars, at the head of which there hung a standard of red silk, with ornaments like those of the staff surrounding a portrait of St. Michel. After him there rolled an immense multitude of lords, knights, and bourgeois, with the peasantry, as it seemed, of the whole province; all dressed to the extent of their means, and in the fashion of their degree.

The official part of the procession having now passed, the young knight pushed lustily on after the principal personages; but not before examining, with a glance of curiosity, the appearance and costume of the various classes of the people before him. The profusion of gold and silver in the dress surprised him much, and the hoods of black or red cloth worn by the high bourgeois did not appear to his judgment to be far inferior in richness to the silk and velvet of the nobility. Short coats, although disliked by the king, were worn by many of his subjects, and were embroidered with silk, and often with pearls, both before and behind. The longer dresses were generally of two colours, called *robes mi-parties*, and produced, in the eyes of the knight, an odd and fantastic effect. The countrymen were usually dressed in brown coats

and breeches, with spatterdashes bound with iron, and slouching hats, ornamented with a leaden medal of the Virgin.

Our adventurer, who endured a squeeze with incomparable patience, speedily found himself once more within view of the persons who were supposed to form the most interesting portion of the procession. He reached the fountain of the Ponceau, which he found surmounted by a large vessel, covered with a fleur-de-lys spouting from its three points, *pro bono publico*, hypocras, wine, and water. Two dolphins (in compliment, no doubt, to their brother Louis) were swimming in the well—at least, so saith the “Ceremonial de France.” A triumphal arch was then passed through, painted of an azure colour, and sprinkled with the ever-recurring fleur-de-lys. An image of Saint John the Baptist, pointing to an Agnus Dei, adorned the summit, with a choir of good fat angels, of the confrerie of Saint Julien, flapping their wings, and playing their fiddles with all their might.

At the hospital of the Holy Trinité, the patent theatre of Paris, a stage was erected, on which the mystery of the Passion was performed in pantomime; the recollection of which, however, was almost immediately effaced by other stages, and other pantomimes, which presented themselves as the procession advanced. When the Chatelet was at length gained, a great rock had grown out of the Place before it, on which a number of shepherds, tending their sheep, were in the act of receiving the news of the nativity, and singing *Gloria in excelsis*. At the bottom of the rock reclined three personages, whose costumes unfortunately have escaped our research; but their names were, the Law of Grace, the Written Law, and the Law of Nature. The Scottish knight, however, was more edified by a spectacle opposite the Boucheries, which represented Paradise, Purgatory, and Hell; with Saint Michel weighing souls in a balance.

At the bridge, Saint Margaret and a dragon were the gate-keepers (in honour, perhaps, of poor little Margaret of Scotland, and the hereafter Louis XI.); while the baptism of our Saviour, by Saint John, was going on. But after entering the cité from the broad avenue of Saint Denis, the spectators could hardly move with the procession through the narrow streets; and by the time the king had reached Notre Dame, our knight could see little more than a multitude of black hoods, interspersed with mitres, and shaven crowns. The proprietors of these articles were, the Ruler of the University,

the archbishop, bishops, abbots, monks, regents of colleges, monitors, sub-monitors, and students.

Here Charles took the customary oath, between the hands of the bishop of Paris, to maintain the privileges of the chapter, and was then permitted to enter the church. This majestic edifice—where you see at least the memory of old Roman and Lombard taste through its Gothic romanticism—was illuminated by thousands of tapers, although it was still day-light. The glimpse which the indefatigable Scot was able to catch of the interior, showed him three arcades running up the nave, all thickly planted with tapers, and terminating nobly with the majestic forms of the master altar. The treasury of the church was opened on this occasion, and numberless relics presented to the eyes of the people, holy enough to redeem a soul from sin by the very sight. Among them was the identical crown of thorns purchased by Saint Louis for one hundred and fifty-six thousand, nine hundred livres of the money of to-day; and also the scourge of iron links with which the same pious monarch loved to chastise himself.

After prayers and thanksgivings were offered, *Te Deum* was given forth by the choir, assisted by thousands of worshippers. The whole atmosphere vibrated with the lofty music. As the sound rolled forth like thunder over the heads of the vast multitude assembled round the cathedral, all sank upon their knees. The neighbouring churches joined in the majestic strain, and those beyond heard and repeated it, like an echo; till the same voice, the same song of triumph and adoration arose from every altar in the city, and every knee in Paris bent to the earth, while every heart repeated, We praise thee, O God! The Scottish knight, brave and reckless as he was—"daring in love, and dauntless in war"—rose up trembling. A tall, black, sinister-looking object, elevated near the church, met his eye at the moment, and divided his feelings between the terrors of heaven and earth. It was a gallows, denoting the right of "haute justice" exercised by the bishop.

The great business of the day was now almost over, and Charles VII. had nothing more to do than to repair to the Palace of the Cité, and exercise the duties of hospitality to all, indiscriminately, who chose to favour him with their company. The street leading to this ancient edifice—famous long before Paris became a metropolis—was narrow and tor-

tuous, crowded with shops, and in every way unlike the avenue to a royal dwelling. Nor was the aspect of the Palace itself a great improvement to the picture. Two sombre and narrow gates admitted the now disordered procession into the Cour du Mai, where the space was too small comparatively to afford any definite idea of the immense pile of buildings in front. Two outside staircases conducted to a great door, which seemed the principal mark of the struggling and panting multitude; and our knight, attacked at once by curiosity, and a most savoury and generous dinner-smell, allowed himself without reluctance to be carried on by the tide.

If disappointed outside, all in the interior was enchantment. The hall into which he entered was so vast and so lofty, that it seemed only fit for the dwelling of giants. It was paved with white and black marble; and the roof, entirely of wood, was elaborately carved, and supported by wooden pillars of azure and gold. All round the walls were seen the statues of the French kings, with the hands raised, if the reign had been fortunate, but hanging disconsolately by their sides, if otherwise. At the further end was a prodigious table of marble, occupying almost the whole breadth of the hall, and so large, indeed, that it was sometimes used as a stage for the performance of farces and mysteries. At this table were seated the king and princes of the blood; while humbler boards, disposed throughout the room, received the other dignitaries—care having been taken to provide separate accommodation for the Town and University. Immense as was the company, the repast was brought up from the kitchens underneath with far less confusion than might have been expected; for here every thing was on so vast a scale, that the stairs of communication, which were two in number, were broad enough to allow the whole army of cooks to march up side by side at one time.

When our young knight, who had eaten nothing since the morning, had done abundant honour to his royal entertainer, and taken more than one hearty draught of wine, which was served in proportion, he bethought himself that his wanderings for the day were not yet over. Taking advantage, therefore, of the noise and confusion incidental to a popular toast, he got up and made his exit, sincerely praying that the king might live long enough to give many more such feasts, and that he himself might be one of the company.

On descending into the Cour du Mai, he found that its

whole area was filled with tables, crowded with company, many of whom were the very lowest of the populace. Near the stairs, however, there were numerous individuals of a higher rank who had found the tables full in the interior; and he listened for a moment, as he passed, to a voice which seemed to be familiar to his ear.

"I tell you, masters," said the speaker, "it was nothing to this; the English hogs like eating too well themselves to give generously to another. Henry V. deserved to lose the first city in Europe, were it only for his hungry feast. Why, I'd as lief dine with a beggar under a hedge, as sit here and eat the cold scraps of a king, with hardly a cup of wine to wash them down! The very poor of the Hôtel Dieu cried shame of it. Down with the English! say I. Come, my masters, pledge me to this toast, 'Down with the English, and up with the banner of St. Luce!'"

"Bravo, my friend," cried the Scot, as he passed by, "Down with the English, and up with the banner of St. Luce!"

"What, is it thou? Hast thou eaten, ha? Hast filled thy belly? Art satisfied?"

"Abundantly."

"And wilt thou still talk of Perth in the same day with Paris?"

"Never, never," answered the knight, who was now in excellent humour.

"Sit down, then, in God's name," said the mollified echevin, "Sit down; here is more to eat, and wine without stint."

"Another time, friend echevin; although a Scot, I would not eat you up at one meal!" And in the midst of the laugh which this little sally occasioned, he made his escape from the house of feasting.

CHAPTER II.

THE streets were still crowded; and the stranger, calculating that the students would not betake themselves to their colleges for some time yet, amused himself with wandering about the precincts of the palace and Notre Dame. The

Sainte Chappelle more particularly attracted his attention, the relics of which, collected by St. Louis alone, cost more than a hundred thousand livres tournois. But this price will not be thought extravagant, if it is recollected, that among the valuables there was not only a piece of the true cross, but a portion of the identical iron which pierced the side of Christ.

Around the cathedral there were grouped so many churches that one might have imagined himself, on such a spot, to be altogether free from the intrusion of sin; but besides the gallows of the bishop, which spoke eloquently of crime and suffering, there were other objects calculated to drag the thoughts of the passer-by from heaven to earth. In passing through a certain street, the knight was accosted by females, whose shameful trade was evident by their want of the customary hood, denied to them by statute. This place, existing from time immemorial in the holy ground of the Cité, was called the Val d'Amour; and the inhabitants formed a female confrerie with St. Magdalen for patroness, whose fête they celebrated with religious festivities. But not only was the Venus Vaga thus converted to Christianity, but the repentant members of the sisterhood were received as nuns under the name of the Filles Dieu; and the knight had seen distributed, during the procession, at the door of their convent in the Rue St. Denis, a silver goblet full of wine to all who passed by and chose to drink.

As the evening closed in, the tumult of the streets began to die away; and the noise of the waters of the Seine, as they boiled and whirled among the wheels of the Pont-aux-Meu-niers, rose above the lessened din, and seemed

Imposing silence with a stilly sound.

Even without inquiring, the stranger easily found his way to the bridge which led to the university, by the crowd of black figures bending thither, from all quarters, their sometimes unsteady steps.

When at length he had reached the left bank of the river, he found himself in altogether another town, differing from the one he had left in every characteristic, both moral and physical. Few shops, few merchants, few tradesmen were to be seen—few even of the omni-coloured nondescripts who belong, one knows not how, to a city. But instead, there was a population of black figures, black cloaks, black cowls, and

a mass of black houses, more resembling public buildings, than private dwellings. Yet, on nearer inspection, the same inequalities were observable which are seen in every large collection of human habitations. Some of the houses were old, some new; some mean, some majestic; and their occupiers, in the same way, exhibited, in the outward man, all the varieties of sublunary fortune.

The knight, in inquiring his way, addressed himself like a prudent stranger, to the more respectable class of the passers-by—to those whose substantial-looking tabards, worn over their college dress, showed that they were at least graduates of the university; but after some time he found himself involved in a labyrinth of mean and narrow streets, where the appearance and manners of the inhabitants were but little calculated to inspire confidence. Groups of students rolled along, quarrelling and fighting as they went; screams, mingled with laughter, were heard from every opening; and the clash of weapons, often more sonorous than cudgels, made the stranger at last bethink himself, whether he had not made some odd mistake—whether he was in reality traversing the Jerusalem of science, the holy city of priests and scholars?

While hesitating for a moment as the idea occurred to him, he was suddenly and violently pushed by a party of students, who appeared to have been skulking behind him; and the Scot, notwithstanding his good humour, instantly collared the nearest offender. This, of course, produced a *row*, which seemed to be all that the black gowns wanted; and in an instant, three or four cudgels were whistling about his head at the same time. Still he did not draw his sword, for the weapon in its sheath was hard and heavy enough almost to make up for the odds against him; while the hauberk beneath his coat of arms defended his body from serious injury. In other respects, however, he was not more than upon a par with the enemy. His coat was merely an ornamental garment, emblazoned with the arms of his family; his immense spurs, made in the fashion of the age, as large as a man's hand, somewhat impeded his pedestrian motions; and on his head he wore only the common pointed cap of the time, protected from spirits rather than men, by a sprig of the holy rowan tree, or mountain-ash.

But his forbearance, attributed, in all probability, to a dread of the University—which learned body would have hung,

without mercy, a much more distinguished man for shedding the blood of a scholar in any quarrel—only increased the violence of his assailants. While wondering whether this was any thing more than an ebullition of the blackguardism of the most turbulent youth in Europe, his doubts were at once dissipated by an exclamation which mingled with the shouts and yells accompanying the attack.

“*Down with the false Scot!*” cried one of the students; and the young knight, perceiving at once that he was in danger of assassination, stood no longer upon ceremony, but drew his sword. His enemies were, no doubt, some of the English who had been permitted, out of respect to the University, to remain at their colleges; and such were the feelings which existed at that time between the two nations, that the energies of the Scot were now still more roused by national hate than by the instinct of self-preservation.

His new position, however, was only calculated to accelerate his fate; for at the same time three of the students threw down their cudgels, and drew a short two-edged sword, concealed under their gowns; and which, strange as it may seem, under such circumstances, they had probably been prevented from using before, by certain feelings of honour. At the sight of this weapon, forbidden to their order, our adventurer perceived that the case was now become very serious indeed; and having an excessive repugnance to the idea of being thus put to death in a corner, he began to shout lustily for help, and at the same time to help himself with redoubled energy.

“Shame upon you, ye pock-puddings!” cried a voice at this juncture, from a window above their head, “to fall like a pack of hounds upon a single man! Who is it ye are slaughtering now? One of yourselves I trust,”—for by this time the daylight was almost entirely gone, and the speaker, who had been attracted to the window by the shouts, could not at first distinguish colours.

“It is a knight, ye false loons!” continued he, in a tone of greater interest, as he bent out of the window, “a belted knight! and, holy saints! a Scot—and his cognizance—O Christ!” At these words the speaker suddenly disappeared from the window, but the next moment his voice was heard sounding like distant thunder through the house.

“Bauldy, Nigel, Andrew,” shouted he, “clubs, ye villains! hurry for your lives! What ho! to the rescue! It is a kindly

Scot, and a Douglas to boot—Saint Bride for the Bleeding Heart!" and with this cry he darted out of the doorway, followed by three wild uncouth-looking figures, who rushed in pell-mell among the students, dealing right and left such sudden and tremendous blows, that each individual had felled his man almost before their presence was observed by the belligerents.

The knight, having now more elbow room, seconded his friends so stoutly that blood began to flow in great abundance; and the tread of a body of horse being heard at the same time in the distance, denoting the approach of the night guard, the English, if English they were, at length fairly took to flight.

"Not a step!" cried the leader of the rescue, as the knight was about to follow in pursuit, "not a step for your life! And know, messire, that however well off you may think yourself at this blessed moment, that red puddle which you have spilt upon the street, may yet cost you your neck! But come, these English cut-throats, it must be allowed, have some indistinct notions of propriety, after all; they will give and take whole skinfuls of broken bones over night, but are not the lads, like some other nations I wot of, to go groaning and blubbering to the rector in the morning."

"And yet," said the knight, "notwithstanding the boasted virtues of the English, I am happy that I owe life and limb to my own countrymen."

"Spoken like a true Scot!" cried the rescuer: "but come, there is no wisdom in standing here in the dark, till the guard come up; and so, messire, you must just step into the college, and let us have a crack till the jaw go by."

The stair was in utter darkness, and so ruinous, that the ascent took some time. In the meanwhile, the conductor continued to be the spokesman of the party.

"Don't be in a hurry," said he, "for in a case like this—I should say a stair-case-haste is not the father of speed. You must know, I am a Douglas myself, by the mother's side; and that is the reason why my heart warmed to the cognizance of the house, when I saw it on your coat of arms. But mind the next step—there—hoot! I should have said the hole where the step was; but I hope you are not much hurt. We collegians, you see are a thought wild at times, and besides, the stair is older than our day; and Bauldy there, and Nigel, and Andrew, some whiles contrive, God knows by what luck they manage it, to get their mouths to

the wine-flask; and then they come triumphing home in a way that no stone and lime can stand. And now we are in the schoolroom. *Cedant arma togæ*. I always put my stick where it can be found in the dark. Bauldy, my man, will you not have the decency to light the candle? that is, if there be any of it left: if not we can easily rive a piece off this bench, and make a fire, which will answer the purpose as well; and when the regent sees the damage in the morning, it is easy laying it upon the rats."

Bauldy, however, after much rummaging, found a small dirty bit of tallow candle, and at length succeeded in lighting it. While this operation was going on, the knight, who had stood for some time in profound silence, suddenly grasped the arm of his rescuer, and demanded in a voice neither very clear, nor very steady, "Am I really in what is called the Scottish college? Speak!"

"Take off your fingers from my arm, then, my man," replied the scholar; "I can speak without the screws. Truly, are you in the Scottish college; and although I say so who should be silent, there is not a college like it in the whole university!" At this moment the light gave a sudden flare, and was as instantaneously extinguished by the awkwardness of Bauldy.

"God be gracious to me!" exclaimed the scholar—"What is this? My heart leaps to my mouth; the tears rise into my eyes; old times, and old places, and old friends, and old by-gone dreams come back, as if conjured by a spell! Speak! Who are you? But need I ask? You are a Douglas; you are—"

"David!" cried the knight, opening his arms as the flame of the candle re-appeared.

"Archibald!" and the two friends fell on one another's necks; the one struggling with his tears, and the other, less acquainted with the customs of society, weeping aloud.

"And you, that I thought were never to have left home!" said David, when they had recovered breath; "more especially, after the connexion of your name with France had ceased, or at least, had become nothing more than a name, by the death of your chief, Earl Archibald, duke of Touraine! Tell me, friend and comrade of my young days, and cousin five times removed—tell me, Archibald of the Braes, what made you leave your father's fireside?"

"War—wo—want," replied Sir Archibald; "my father

is dead in a border foray; my patrimony is eaten up by the creditors; and, as a baillie of the tailors most truly, but most impudently, cast up to me to-day, I have come to France, that I may continue, as heretofore, to eat of the wheaten bread, and drink of the red wine."

"Alas, the day!" ejaculated his friend; "he was a worthy man, your father, and my mother's near cousin! It is no wonder I did not know you, for you are a head taller, and your voice is like a drum. But you bleed, Archibald!"

"It is nothing."

"No more it is: and if otherwise, we know nothing here of the art of the leech, which Messire Walter of Metz justly casteth into contempt, as having only to do with the perishing body. It has no part in our clergy, formerly termed the *trivium* and *quadrivium*, and which consisteth only of the noble arts and sciences of astronomy, music, geometry, logic, natural philosophy, and grammar. When these lads are wounded, which happens to them, poor fellows, seven times a week—Set down the candle, Bauldy, and don't hold it at us, as if we were world's wonders, and wipe your eyes, and shut your mouth, my man: he is come, Douglas, of gentle kin, and is every inch of him a kindly Scot. And there is Nigel, with a headful of fiery hair like a comet, he is a cousin not far removed of my own; and Andrew at his back, who counts lineage with the Kerrs of Cessford. Away with ye now to bed, sirs. Fye, I heard the bell of the ignitegium, or couvre-feu, an hour ago; and besides, I have a long crack to get over with Sir Archibald: for you already know, my friends, that, although an Armstrong by name and by nature, I have the blood of the Douglasses in my veins."

The Scottish students, who appeared to be entirely under the management of David Armstrong, took the hint promptly; and, after shaking hands roughly and warmly with Sir Archibald, retired to find their way to bed in the dark.

"And mind me, lads," cried David, bawling after them before he shut the door, "it will hardly be worth while to take off your clothes so late; but keep your cudgels within arm's length at the least, in case of call; and above all things, commend your souls to the care of God and the Blessed Virgin before ye dare to close an eye!"

"Not that I would have you think, Archibald," continued he, after he had fastened the door, "that they are likely to forget their prayers, poor lads; or, in fact, for all my jokes

upon the stair, that they are more *ebriosi*, or, in the vulgar speech, given to drink, than most of the other students: but enough of this for the present; you will know them better, if you remain long in Paris."

"I have cause to know them already," said Douglas, "and to remember them all my life; but as for how long I shall remain in Paris, or whither I may bend my steps when I leave it, or what I am to be about; these are questions, my dear friend, that I cannot answer, seeing that I am in profound ignorance upon the subject myself."

"Well, if that is not amazing! So near a kinsman, and a godson to boot, of the Earl Archibald of Douglas, duke of Touraine, whose soul may heaven assoil! Why, I should have thought you might have put forth your hand at will among the loaves and fishes. But it is the way of the world, I suppose. The Earl is dead on the field of battle; and so is his son; and so are most of the five thousand brave Scots they brought over with them; and the English are flying the country, bewitched even by the ashes of that wonderful wench Jean; and Charles VII. is the little king of Bourges no more, but the master of lordly France. Well! well! well!"

"Your thoughts fly too fast, good David, and overshoot the mark. I have been received by king Charles with a distinction due to the name I bear; and I have reason to believe, that my chance at court is far higher than my personal deserts. But yet, I know not how it is; I feel, as it were, unsettled. I—," and the knight paused, and observed that the candle wanted snuffing.

While Armstrong was performing this operation, slowly and methodically, by taking out the candle-end from its socket with one hand, and decapitating the burnt wick with the finger and thumb of the other, he threw a keen glance of observation upon his friend, between his half-closed eye-lids. His expansive and sagacious brow then began to curl towards the nose; he sucked in his cheeks; and his mouth twisted itself awry; but having subdued these indecorums of features usually characterized by a kind of good-tempered solemnity, he turned gravely to the knight.

"Archibald of the Braes," said he, "I was forgetting to ask after the health of Margaret Leslie of the Lynhead."

"Alas, poor girl! she is dead of consumption long ago."

"May her soul find grace! But it was rather the young

Agnes of the Holmes who was in my thoughts; she for whom you may remember you fought so bitterly with the knight of Lochmahow, when as yet you were both pages."

"Agnes of the Holmes," replied Sir Archibald composedly, "is now the wife of the knight of Lochmahow."

"A-hem! And Mary Elliot? whom in our wild days, may the Lord forgive us! we used to call the Virgin Mary, because of her pride and fierceness to the young men."

"Tush! her golden hair has turned as red as Nigel's."

"God's will be done! I have nothing to say to it."

At this moment the candle sunk to the bottom of the deep socket, whence it emitted only a fitful glare. The apartment was vast, and solidly built; but time and neglect had defaced and injured the massive walls, which they could not altogether ruin. Some benches seemed to be the only furniture; and these were formed of rough planks, which had experienced at divers times the fate so recently threatened them: but a dusky object, also, appeared in the distance, which might have been a pulpit, or other seat of honour, consecrated to the service of the regent. The fire-place was a vast gulf, which contained the dust and litter of the school, for aught we know, from the time of St. Louis; but the damp, unwholesome air of the room proclaimed, that fuel was not considered an object of necessity in the Scottish college.

When the knight had gazed for some moments at this scene, by the dying light of the candle, he withdrew his eyes, to fix them on the face of his friend. David Armstrong's features were all decidedly handsome; but taken collectively, they formed a portrait more full of what is called character, than manly beauty. His expansive forehead was intersected by several small horizontal wrinkles; his eyes, glowing rather than sparkling with a steady light, were set deep in his head, and overhung by dark eyebrows, delicately pencilled, but somewhat fuller than became his age; his nose, arched, massive, and firmly placed, conveyed an idea of decision and determination; while his mouth and chin, divested of the beard, expressed a degree of benevolence amounting to softness; and his head was surmounted by a small, round, black cap, almost the shape of the skull; from the sides and back of which, a mass of dark matted hair fell down to his shoulders. His gown, open in front, and betraying every possible mark, both of neglect and strife, disclosed a strong square-built, yet symmetrical, figure of the middle height; while the

hood, or cowl, falling in absolute rags upon his back, threw an air of poverty and desolation over a portrait which, otherwise, would have been only striking and picturesque.

As Sir Archibald looked, the embarrassment which had been visible in his manner wore off, and an expression of kindness, tinged with pity, took its place.

"My dear friend," said he, grasping the hand of his old comrade, "it was to answer all your questions; to tell you all I know; and to crave the counsel, and, if need be, the aid of one who is wise and true, as well as brave; it was for this that I am here to-night. But there is now no time for a story like mine; it is late, and we shall soon be in the dark; and, to say the truth, David, I feel that I ought not to speak to you *here* of any affairs but your own." David's eyes followed those of his friend round the room.

"It is well-sized," said he, "that you must allow; and yet not so well cared for as it might be. The truth is, we students, as I said before, are a thought wild, as it were; and although, in this individual college, owing to the war, and accidents, and desertions, our whole number, at the present blessed moment, amounts to no more than four; yet Bauldy, and Nigel, and Andrew, poor fellows, will have a break out at times, and then stone and wood cannot hold them! Man! I have seen them battle their way home, with a train of friends and enemies at their heels, till within these four walls we were seven score of us poor scholars, all fighting pell-mell, like so many devils!"

"Poor scholars indeed!"

"And then, you see, Archibald, the luxuries of the world, in whole furniture, and evenly-plastered walls, and swept floors, and darned gowns, and such like vanities, would ill become the vocation to which we are called—"

"Hold! what vocation may that be?"

"What vocation may that be?" exclaimed the student with heat, "was there ever such ignorance heard tell of? Do you not know that we are the *clerks* of the University? Do you not see the sacred tonsure?" and snatching off his cap, he showed his scalp bare about a hand's-breadth. The knight stared in amazement—he even felt the bald crown of his friend, with something like the infidelity of St. Thomas.

"Yes, Archibald of the Braes," continued David with solemnity, "we are priests before the Lord, every mother's son of us! But we are not monks, my dear friend; on the con-

Handwritten signature

trary, we hate with a religious hatred all such lazy and luxurious vagabonds. We are not brethren of this or that order, but brethren of the whole Gospel; we are aspirants of the holy ministry, whereof the ministers are the canons regular of the church of Christ?"

"You must allow, notwithstanding," said Douglas, when he had recovered from his surprise, "that the church takes but little carnal care of her nursery."

"Too much! too much!" replied his friend, "our privileges unite in one those of the clergy and nobility. And is it nothing to belong to a body which controls the very state? which gives its sanction, sometimes, even to a treaty of peace? which cites the very magistrates before its tribunal? which excommunicates the officers of government themselves, when they put forth their tax-gathering fingers upon the carnal wealth of a scholar?"

"But touching this carnal wealth——"

"Why, it is but a few years, as I may say, since messire de Savoisy, the chamberlain of the king, was dismissed from his office, and banished the kingdom, because some of his people rode through our procession on its way to St. Catherine of the Val des Ecoliers, thereby compelling the poor students to break the heads of the intruders with stones!"

"That is excellent," exclaimed the knight, rubbing his hands; "but I would fain know by what means the University exercises a power so extraordinary, and, no doubt, so reasonable."

"By means of a humble remonstrance and petition, imploring the government with tears and groans, as it were, not to drive it to the cruel necessity of exiling itself from a city where such outrages could be perpetrated with impunity. Supposing the document, for instance, to be addressed to the king, it shall commence thus, 'Vivat rex! vivat rex! vivat rex! May he live corporeally; may he live spiritually; may he live civilly; may he live spiritually, lastingly, and reasonably. This beautiful salutation is offered and proposed by the daughter of the king, by the fair clear sun of France, and of all Christendom——'"

"By whom, in the name of the saints?"

"By 'the daughter of the king,' I say, 'the fountain of all science, the light of our faith, the beauty, the ornament, the honour of France and of the world—the University of Paris.'"

"Excellent, wonderful!"

“Or, supposing the rector petitions in behalf of his suffering mother, as in the aforesaid affair of messire de Savoisy,—‘In exposing to you,’ says he, ‘messeigneurs,’—for, you see, we were at that time even as a helpless orphan, because of the lunacy of king Charles VI., and were therefore obliged to address the parliament—‘In exposing to you, messeigneurs,’—and a slight snuffle, but so light as to be hardly observable, gave a richness to the scholar’s voice,—‘the pitiful and very miserable complaint of the daughter of the king, my mother, the university of Paris, I shall commence by a suitable saying of Scripture: Estote misericordus!’”

“Good! good! ha! ha! ha!” shouted the knight; and his hearty laugh, which had been preparing while the student spoke, rung through the room. David Armstrong, however, continued with imperturbable gravity, and without noticing, even by the slightest expression of feature, the mirth of his friend.

“As for carnal wealth, Archibald,” said he, “seeing that we are but seekers after wisdom, and fore-destined ministers of the sanctuary, what end would it serve? In general, we are bursars; and it is only lately that they have begun to throw open the colleges to boarders and day-scholars. If stipendiaries of the school, the regent, who is but human after all, tries, no doubt, to turn the penny by us as well as he can; if *martinets*—for so we term those who are able to flit about, like swallows, from teacher to teacher—the Lord have mercy upon us, when it comes to argumentations and examinations!”

“That is to say, you are as badly off in one case as in the other.”

“Not so: the bursars are educated, and supposed to be fed at the expense of the founders of the bursary; while the martinets must feed themselves, and pay besides a matter of four sous a month, for leave to learn in the college.”

“That accounts,” said Douglas with emotion, “for the spectacle I witnessed with horror and disgust to-day in the public streets.”

“They were not Scots!” cried the student quickly, and he withdrew his face into the shade. “But what matters it?” added he, after a moment’s pause, “poverty is the badge of the scholar, and will be so to the end of time; and if there be among us those who cry in the highways for bread rather than die like wolves, without a howl—why, Archibald,” and he leant forward once more, and allowed the light to stream

full on his untroubled brow—"why, man, they are but dunces in philosophy, that is all that needs be said."

"Scholarship, David," said the knight, "who no longer felt any desire to laugh, "is with you a profession. Tell me, what are your hopes? What are your prospects? The church is a lucrative and noble field."

"Truly is it, Archibald," replied the student, "the church is indeed a lucrative and noble field; lucrative to the rich, and noble to the high-descended! But besides the small number of rich and noble, besides the proteges of the rector, and the cousins, and cater-cousins of the eighty regents, there are thirty thousand of us here who are neither rich nor noble, who call not the rector friend, nor the regents cousin. To read my fortune, you must calculate the chance of these thirty thousand in the mass, and then divide that chance into thirty thousand parts—one whereof is mine."

At this ominous conclusion, the flame of the candle flashed suddenly up, illumining for a moment with a dull imperfect glare the dreary room, and bringing out, in Rembrandt lights and shadows, the remarkable head of the student, and the martial figure of the young knight. It then sunk as suddenly in the socket, and disappeared in utter darkness.

"And now, Archibald," said David Armstrong, continuing to speak as if an eclipse of the kind had been of too common an occurrence to be worthy of remark, "You will ask why I continue to waste my life in so hopeless a pursuit? You will ask—"

"Ask! interrupted the knight with indignation, as he started up from the bench, and floundered out into the middle of the room, where his voice sounded amidst the obscurity like the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "I will ask, indeed, why Philip Armstrong's son chooses to sit starving of hunger, and shivering with cold, in a den of wild beasts rather than buckle harness on his back, like his ancestors before him, and carve out his way to fortune with his father's sword! Why, man, thou art bewitched! They have thrown a spell over thee with their hellish gibberish, which has benumbed thy faculties. What ho! Awake! Come with me into the light of day, and let us be comrades in arms, as we once were brother imps in mischief! Trust me, this night-mare of the soul will vanish at one blast of the war-trumpet!"

"It would, it would!" cried the student, rising, "I know

that it would ; even I, who see, although afar off, the glories of science, and who feel by anticipation the pride, the power, the——O Archibald, you cannot comprehend me. I eat of the coarsest, and drink of the thinnest : my bed is of straw, my apparel of rags, my habitation of ruins ; and think you that I look for my reward in the gown of a curé or a curé's vicar ? No : I have an aim far higher than your eye can reach, or even your soul understand ! But this is not the time to be more explicit. My struggles on one hand, and misgivings on the other, have of late been severe ; but the hour approaches quickly which shall determine my fate." Douglas could hear the unquiet step of the speaker in the remotest corners of the apartment, and the labouring sighs with which he was delivered of these words ; and for a moment the idea entered his mind that his friend was insane !

"David," said he, "will you accompany me to my lodgings ? It is cold here as well as dark, and the breath of heaven will do us both good."

"Of a surety," replied David, in his usual tone, "I will not leave you to your own guidance on the hill of Saint Genevieve. Come, where are you now ? You are not the first who lost his way in the grove of Academus. There, take hold of my cowl—but not so, as if it was a banner which you were wresting from the enemy. The dress of a student, I assure you, costs money, and the tailor's account, besides, is written in Latin : 'Pro capucio,' so much ; 'pro corneta cum farcitura,' the Lord knows how much more. And now, being at the middle of the stair, you will make a wide straddle to get over the hole, whose depths you would needs explore in coming up ; and there is no need for starting as if you heard unexpected thunder, when it is only Bauldy, and Nigel, and Andrew, poor fellows, slumbering like babes in the next room. We are now in the street. It must be late indeed, for all is quiet."

The friends pursued their way, guided more by the local knowledge of Armstrong, than by the lamps that burned dimly, here and there, before statues and pictures of the saints. As they approached the side of the river, they met more than one passenger, coming on with a lantern in one hand and a sword in the other ; but the strangers always took to flight on seeing two persons wandering along in the dark. They at length reached the bridge leading to the palace, where Sir Archibald had been assigned a lodging.

"You are now at home," said the student, "I shall be with you to-morrow, if I am a living man, after the first class; and in the mean time, go straight to your bed, without turning to the right or to the left, and the blessing of the saints go with you!"

CHAPTER III.

THE student stood gazing for some time after his friend, till his form had disappeared in the darkness, and the echo of his tread died away. He then tightened his leathern belt, drew his gown more closely round him, pulled the tattered cowl over his brow, and crossing his arms upon his bosom, walked slowly homeward, like a man plunged in the deepest meditation. The great city slept. The night wind sighed along the streets, as if they had been ruins; and the river answered with its stilly voice, to the sound. It was the hour when spirits were supposed to be permitted to walk the earth; and when the noises of winds and waters were easily syllabled into their mystic speech, by the imaginations of men.

David, however, seemed either free from the superstition of the time, or his preoccupied mind afforded no room for its fantastic creations. He walked slowly on, without raising his eyes from the ground, till he had almost reached the Scottish College; he then turned suddenly into a lane to the right; his footsteps became both swifter and lighter; and if his dark figure had been seen gliding thus quickly and noiselessly through the gloom, he might have been taken himself, for one of the supernatural beings who haunt the night.

From one long and tortuous lane, he glided into another, till it might have seemed that he was walking for exercise, or for the purpose of counting every turning and winding on the peopled hill of Saint Genevieve. At length he stopped before a mean and ruinous-looking house, in the darkest part of a dirty and almost deserted street. This, apparently, was his destination. After looking round for a moment, as if to make sure that he was not observed, he plunged into a miserable gateway, the door of which, unnecessary as it seemed

to the poverty of the inhabitants, was unfastened. He crossed the silent court; entered the door of what seemed in former times to have been a kitchen, and found himself beyond in a labyrinth of roofless walls, and ruined apartments. Here the student, after looking round once more, with hardly necessary caution, entered a low and narrow opening, where the gloom of the night was at once converted into utter darkness.

After groping his way for some time, the path was shut by a strong door, which he opened by means of a concealed spring; and having entered, he closed it carefully behind him. Another, another, and another barrier of the same kind were passed, the level of the ground always sinking as he proceeded, till he appeared to have descended into the very bowels of the hill of the University. At length his art seemed to be at fault: a door of treble strength, which he tried like the others, refused to yield; and, after listening for a moment, he struck three blows with a stone upon the massive frame. The summons was answered speedily from within, in a voice which sounded distant and indistinct.

"Whom seekest thou?" was the challenge.

"Trismegistus," replied the student. A rumbling noise of bolts and locks then succeeded; and the heavy door began to revolve upon its hinges, till, having opened to the width of a few inches, its progress was suddenly checked by a strong iron chain.

"Is it thou?" said the voice querulously; "Art thou come at last?" and before David could open his eyes, blinded by the glare of a lamp, the chain fell, and he found himself drawn impatiently, but feebly, into the room.

"Stand not," said his host, whispering tremulously, while he performed this operation, "but come in at once! Hush! Not a word above thy breath! What!—thou wert not observed? Art sure? Silence! Not a syllable till the door is fast. Now speak: no, waste not time in words; but come, for the great work stands, and I have need of the strength of thy young arm."

The apartment had the appearance of a vast and lofty oblong cavern, cut with tolerable regularity at the sides, but roofed by the unhewn rock. At the farther end there was a great furnace, on which a large open cauldron bubbled audibly; and near it stood a table covered with manuscripts and writing materials. There were, also, disposed in various parts of the chamber, huge piles of different substances, chiefly of a min-

eral nature ; and here and there, a smaller furnace and crucible awaited the need of the operator. At the sides of the oblong area were several dark vaulted recesses, used apparently as storehouses, and bearing a sort of rude resemblance to a series of lateral chapels opening from the nave of a Gothic church. This idea would, no doubt, have been further assisted, in the mind of an imaginative spectator, by the ground rising, towards the farther end of the cavern, so as to look like a chancel : and by the huge and massive table near the wall beyond, occupying the place of the master-altar.

When the high-priest of this strange temple of Science, where the deity was as yet an idol, and the worship a blind and mystic superstition, had ran, rather than walked, up to the table, he seated himself with the feverish haste which characterized all his motions, and began to turn over the papers with a tremulous hand. His dress was mean and common ; but a cap of unusually large dimensions, and made of faded velvet, falling over his brow till it overshadowed the eyes, gave him, upon the whole, rather a singular appearance. About his face there was nothing common-place. His dark eyes still sparkled through the films of age ; and looked up at the person he addressed with an eager, watchful, and suspicious glare, from beneath an overhanging canopy of brows as white as snow. A hooked nose, a well-formed mouth, and a flat and individually unmeaning chin completed the inventory of his features ; while these were set off by a long white beard, that would have looked venerable if clean. He was evidently a foreigner in France, but of what nation it would have been difficult to tell ; and yet, his was precisely the physiognomy which excites, while puzzling, the curiosity.

“ Why hast thou tarried ? ” said he, suddenly, as if reverting to an idea which had escaped him in the hurry of his thoughts ; and pausing in his occupation, he fixed a glance of intense scrutiny upon the student’s face. David Armstrong was standing beside the table, with his hands folded across his bosom, and engaged in perusing the features of the old man with such undisguised earnestness, that the latter withdrew his eyes as suddenly as he had raised them.

“ Did you make a remark, doctor ? ” said David, awaking from his abstraction.

“ I asked a question,” replied the doctor angrily, “ why hast thou tarried ? It is not thy wont : thou lovest not the

lean commons of thy college; and the time of our evening meal is long past."

"I care not for warm meats at night," said David; "if the fare be good, it will not be the worse for standing. But as for the delay, which seems to you so remarkable, it was caused by the visit of a friend."

"Of a friend! What friend?"

"A foreigner."

"A foreigner! What foreigner? A traveller? Whither have been the steps of his pilgrimage? To the East? My God; and these things are to be kept from me! What did he tell thee? Does he know more than I? Good David! am not I thy friend? thy best friend? thy only friend? And thy supper, cold though it be—for I know thou lovest it cold—hath it not tarried even till now for thy coming? Ho! daughter!" and he opened a chink of a small door behind him; "the meal of the young man, even of the good young man, David! and a pint of wine, daughter; yea, a whole pint! Come David Strongarm, let us commune together. Are we not brethren? Are we not father and son? Do we not seek, hand in hand, the hidden place of the Ter Maximus, yea, of the Great Interpreter? Who was this visitor, this stranger, this traveller? Speak!"

At this moment the door opened, and David's supper appeared; whereupon the student, who had hitherto waited patiently, found an opportunity of replying to his categorist, which he did in a voice so cold and sedate, as to contrast strangely with the feverish tones of the other.

"He is a man of war," said he, and he knows hardly the names of the seven metals."

The meal, not cold, but luxuriously warm, and set out with peculiar neatness on a wooden salver, was then placed before the hungry Scot; and a gleam of sunshine seemed to steal over the still features of David Armstrong as he dipped his fingers in a basin of water, held to him by the Hebe of the feast. This was a young woman, who bore what is called a striking resemblance to the doctor, and yet, was as absolutely *unlike* him as one human being can be to another. Her eyes were singularly bright; and her eyebrows full, like her father's, but exquisitely pencilled; her nose, too, was arched, but so delicately modelled, that it would not have seemed out of place on a Greek statue; her mouth, half pouting with a beautiful seriousness, appeared to reprove the

wishes it inspired; and a chin, broad and unmeaning in the old man, when filled up in her with the rich ripe plumpness of youth, redeemed with a dash of voluptuousness a certain virgin-severity of expression, which characterized the rest of the portrait. Her hair was as black as night, and so luxuriant, that the simple head-gear she wore was hardly able to confine it within the customary bounds; while, owing perhaps in part to the effect of contrast, her complexion seemed absolutely colourless. That her mother had been a native of some foreign, perhaps some Eastern, clime, like her father, was evident. David could have believed that she was a Spaniard, had the paleness of her cheek exhibited any tinge of sallowness.

"It is a fine night, mademoiselle," said he, blushing with the effort, while his fingers lingered in the water, thrilling with its coolness, and his eyes were fixed bashfully on the beautiful face before him.—"It is a fine night in the upper world, mademoiselle, only dark, and cold; and inclining to wind and dampness." The damsel smiled demurely at this almanack information, and bent her head.

"You will not have been up stairs to-night, perhaps?" persisted the student. She shook her ringlets, and attempted to withdraw the basin suddenly.

"Thanks to you—it is a great refreshment," continued he, holding fast; "O mademoiselle, what a lonely life you must lead here! One would think you would be glad to open your lips to a Christian man, and a clerk of the University to boot, an Armstrong by name, and a Douglas by the mother's side!"

"My God! what is all this?" cried the father, raising his head: "What planet were you born under, that you will stand with your hands in cold water, while on one side the savour of the meat escapeth, and on the other, the great work standeth still?"

"Chide him not, father," said the damsel, suddenly; "the young man means kindly and speaks kindly—and God knows such accents are strange enough to our ears to be welcome when they come!" David heard her voice for the first time; and for the first time her eyes met his, in a full, frank, confiding, yet melancholy look. The student's heart throbbed wildly, and his brain began to swim: the next moment the damsel was gone.

It was a property of this girl to come and go like an appa-

rition. Summoned by her father's voice, she was accustomed to stand before them as suddenly as a spirit called up by enchantment; and when the wondering scholar was in the very midst of his gaze, and perhaps turning over in his mind the most potent spell to make her speak, even so would she vanish. Her stature was above the middle size, and her form neither slight nor spare; yet her footfall gave no sound to his ear; and her approach was only made sensible by the waving of her garments, and by a strange faintness, as David averred to himself, which came over his heart.

He had thus beheld her every night for several years; he had watched her ripening beneath his eye, till her spring of youth had began to warm and brighten into summer; he had seen the clear transparent paleness of her cheek grow richer and richer every month, yet not less pale; and by degrees, the heart that had followed with surprised delight the fairy motions of the girl, began to quake and tremble at the approach of the young woman.

In vain had he tried again and again to engage her in conversation, or even to elicit a single monosyllable from her lips: she answered with an inclination of the head, a smile, a look as quick as thought; and if he persisted, she either vanished like a spirit, or, if her brief duties were not over, took refuge at her father's side. In vain had he tried to draw even from her eyes something more than a mere assent: he could not fix them for an instant. When they encountered his, they sought the ground, the roof, the distant entrance of the cavern, and always returned more sad, yet more high and proud, from the excursion. She said, as plainly as silence could speak: "Between thee and me, there is an impassable barrier:" and David Armstrong would have given every drop of the Douglas blood in his veins to know what it was, or that it gave her grief to say so.

On the present occasion, as soon as she had disappeared, he sat down to a meal which, judging by the celerity and avidity with which he dispatched it, had probably caught some fascination from her hands; if these symptoms did not rather indicate an excellent appetite produced by the economy of the regent, some of whose brethren, it is said, considered the expenditure of a sous a day sufficient to keep up the carnal man of a student. David, after eating neither like a lover nor an alchemist, seized the goblet with the haste of one who would make up for lost time.

"Here's to it!" said he, nodding gravely to his companion, and he emptied the measure at a draught. "And now, doctor (it is but thin drink, that!), let us to work in earnest." He fastened his cloak in such a manner as to prevent its impeding his motions, furred up his sleeves to the elbows, and stretched forth his muscular arm for a paper which contained, we suppose, the *recipe* of the night. His brow, in the mean time, resumed the wrinkles which had been chased away by the damsel; the sunny smile which in her presence had decorated his staid features, vanished; and a deep shade of care and study descending upon his countenance, added at least a dozen years in appearance to his age.

As the doctor handed him the paper across the table, the old man stopped suddenly short, and looked towards the entrance of the vault with a wild and terrified expression. His assistant's eyes sought the same quarter, and both listened for some time without breathing. The silence, however, was like that of the grave. The upper world, whose business and turmoil might have produced some vibration which perhaps could be heard even here, was drowned in sleep; and the cavern was far beyond the approach even of those animals that burrow deeper than man in the earth.

David, smitten with the contagion of a fear, of which he knew not the object, looked around him, as if for the first time. The tall piles that rose here and there like spectral figures, and to which the unstable flame of the furnace gave an appearance of life and motion; the smaller openings, gaping like vaulted tombs at the sides; and the descending distance, overhung with black shadows as with a pall—all the strange, fantastic circumstances of the scene, with their adjuncts of time, place, occupation—and even the countenance of the high-priest of Hermes, with its ashy complexion, its white, trembling lips, its staring eyes, its singularly lofty brow, from which the cap was thrown back, and where the damps of mortal terror were gathering in large drops: every thing concurred to fill the student with a species of awe, to which his mind had been hitherto a stranger.

"In the name of the ever-Virgin doctor," said he in a whisper, "what is it?"

"Silence! name not the woman!"

"What!"

"That is, speak not—hush! It is nothing!" and the doctor drew down his cap, with a sigh of relief, although his

hand still trembled, and, turning to his pupil, he writhed his lips into a smile that would have been ludicrous if it had not been ghastly.

"It was, perchance, a dog," said he, "yea, it *was* a dog, even a houseless cur, that wandered for shelter into the passage; for I heard with mine ears the touch of a living thing upon the first door."

"Messire Jean of Poitu, and doctor of I know not what!" said David, enraged with his master for having made him afraid, and excited besides with a religious suspicion; "even if it had been no dog, but a true spirit of the abyss, which you heard, methinks there was all the more occasion to speak reverently of the blessed mother of God!"

"I speak reverently! My good young man—my worthy David Strongarm, thou didst not hear: as thy soul liveth, thou didst not hear!"

"You forbade me to name her."

"I did, my excellent friend; for even holy names will betray those who hide from the face of the seeker."

"But you called her—"

"What? A woman! My good David, wouldst thou have had me call her a dog? Dost thou dream?—Art thou drunken with wine?—Hast thou forgotten the torture of fire to which two of our brethren were so lately exposed, in order to make them declare the secrets of their science? Is thy own young life of less value to thee than are these few and miserable white hairs to me?" David looked as sour as a controversialist who is staggered in argument, and yet believes, that after all he may be right: he had nothing to reply, however; and turning doggedly forth, he stretched his hand once more for the paper. It dropped, however, from the extended fingers of the adept, and floating away to some distance, its fall upon the earthen floor was distinctly heard amidst the profound silence of the moment.

"There, there!" cried the old man, growing again as pale as a corpse, "I was right, it is no dog! Daughter—" and his voice rose to a shrill shriek as he called instinctively upon the ministering spirit of the place. She was by their side before David could turn his eyes to the small door, to watch her coming; and in another instant, darting like a moonbeam through the gloom, her form was lost among the shadows near the entrance of the vault. A pause of intense anxiety ensued, during which a sound from without, hardly louder

than the fitful sighing of the wind, reached even the unaccustomed ears of the student. The young woman was then seen gliding out of the darkness, like an apparition; and when she stood suddenly beside them, David looked at her almost with awe, so tall, so still, so majestic, she appeared.

"It is the footstep," said she slowly, and after having fixed her eye for some moments on her father, as if to give him time to recollect himself; "it is the footstep of one to whom the secrets of the passage are known."

"Secrets," whispered the adept hoarsely, while a gleam of fierceness shot through the terror in his eye, "secrets that are known only to us three, and to the dead! What am I to think?" and his hand slipped with an imperceptible motion, into the folds of his cloak, as he turned to his pupil.

"Think that the dead have risen again," said Armstrong haughtily, "if it be necessary to solve the problem." The young woman grasped her father's arm with one hand, and with the other caught up a small lamp from the table, which she held to the face of the student. When the light had played for a moment upon the disdainful curl of his lip, upon his bold and open brow, and upon the deep bright eyes that were turned half reproachfully; half bashfully, upon her's, she withdrew her hand from the old man's arm, and set down the lamp.

"I will answer for him with my life," said she.

"And I will defend you with mine!" exclaimed David, in an under-tone, and with a thrill of delight.

The sound of knocking was now heard distinctly at the door of the cavern.

"God of our fathers!" cried the adept, "what is to be done? We will escape by the dwelling-house; we will hide among the ruins; we will take the wings of the morning, and flee away from this city of destruction. No; I will not leave thee!" and he extended his arms wildly towards the cauldron. "As the Lord liveth, I will not leave thee. Here have I travailed by day and by night; here hath my life glided by, like a cloud and a shadow; and here will I be slain, even as it were at the horns of the altar! I tell thee, daughter, I will not stir! Let them come; the pincers are ready, yea, in mine own furnace; and here is the flesh!" and he bared his shrivelled arm to the shoulder, "tear your fill, ye idolatrous dogs, for I will die in silence!"

"Thou must open to him that knocketh," said the daugh-

ter, calmly, after her father had exhausted himself. "If our enemies are upon us, the entrance must be beset, or an individual would never trust himself alone; if only one man cometh upon his own adventure, lo! there be here two of you."

"Thou art right, thou art right," said the alchemist, while a gleam of hope passed across his ashy face.

"And if the sea," continued she, "hath indeed cast up her dead—"

"Name it not!" interrupted her father with horror, "the bond is cancelled by his death; and rather than give up my soul again to the dominion of hell, I would—I would part with my last—with half—yea, with a tithe of my gold, and sacrifice—all else save the sure and certain hope of the stone of Hermes!" The knocking became louder, longer, and more impatient.

"I must be alone," said the adept, who seemed to have fairly turned to bay; retire thou, and David Strongarm, out of hearing, but yet within call."

"Not so, father," said the damsel; "a stranger may not enter our private dwelling; but the young man will bestow himself in one of yonder distant cells, where thy voice cannot reach him, unless perchance thou call aloud for aid."

"Again thou art right," said the father; and, drawing from beneath his cloak a long two-edged sharp-pointed knife, or dagger, he put it into the hand of the student. "Thine arm is strong, good David, said he, "as thy name truly implies, and thy spirit is valiant; remember, the danger that comes threatens us both; and if otherwise, I know thou wouldst not see the old man slain, thy father in the spirit, thy brother in the great search. Go, my daughter shall conduct thee; and be ready to come forth, even like a man of war, when thou shalt hear the cry of my lips, 'To your tents, O Israel!'"

David's fingers twisted themselves instinctively round the hilt of the knife, as he followed the young woman towards the entrance of the cavern.

"Remember," said he to her, in a low voice, "that what I shall do this night is for your sake!"

"For the sake of any one thou wilt," said she, when they had gained the farthest of the lateral vaults, "thou shalt do nothing. If our visitor be one of the authorities of the city, surrounded as our dwelling must be by his comrades, resistance would only be a waste of blood; if it be he whom I

fear it is, thy interference will do harm, but cannot possibly do good. Promise me, that thou wilt not go forth, whatever cry thou hearest, unless thine eyes see that my father's life is in danger."

The damsel spoke as one having authority; but David hesitated.

"If you think," said he, "because I am a student, and a sort of embryo priest (or rather, I should say, a neophyte, seeing that, as yet, I am under no vows), that I am unable to cope with the best sword in France, you know but little of the Armstrongs, to say nothing of the Douglas blood that runs in my veins!"

"I know that thou art strong and brave," replied the damsel, "and good, and kind, and true! Wilt thou promise? It is my first request, and it shall be my last."

"No, not the last—recall that word, and I will do your bidding to the death! There! the knocking becomes louder, and your father approaches with the lamp: speak!

"The last! the last! the last!" and she glided swiftly away, and whispering a word to her father as she passed, disappeared from the cavern.

As the adept went by, with a quick jerking step, which, however, cleared as little ground as possible, he motioned to his pupil to retire farther into the recess; and then, taking leave of him with a piteous and imploring gesture, he proceeded to the entrance door. The knocking was now mingled with the tones of a human voice without; but so massive was the material through which the sounds had to pass, that nothing more was heard than an indistinct noise, like the muttering of thunder. The old man's heart seemed to die within him; his step became slower; and when, on gaining the door, he turned round and looked towards the recess, as if to sustain himself with the idea that help was near, David could see that his face was shrunk and livid like that of a corpse. He at length put his mouth close to the timber, and with a mighty effort called out, in a voice that resembled a shriek:

"Whom seekest thou?" David could not hear the reply; but the adept, who had placed his ear to the door, staggered back. It was evident, by the motion of the lamp, that he trembled in every joint; yet, with the haste of one who seeks to admit a welcome visitor, he instantly undid the bolts; the chain fell with a heavy clank; the door swung open; and a

personage entered the cavern, touching whom the reader, if he hath any curiosity on the subject, may consult the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

"MESSIRE Jean of Poitou," said the stranger, in a rich deep voice, and at the same time throwing off the alchemist, who fawned upon him like a spaniel—"this methinks is but tardy greeting to so dear and intimate a friend and benefactor to boot, after and absence of years!"

"Let me look at him!" cried Messire Jean, in an ecstasy, which, however, did not restore the blood to his cheeks; "let me touch his raiment so that I may be sure it is no shadow from the grave, come to mock me with the form of my lost Prelati! And is it really thou? And hath the ravenous sea truly given up her dead? Come, let us be merry. Ho! my man-servants and my maid-servants, bring hither the fatted calf and kill it! Let us put a garment upon him, yea, a new garment, and a ring upon his finger, and shoes upon his feet!—Alas! joy maketh me forget that I am a beggar. My household is scattered like dust upon the four winds of heaven; we have drunken our water for money, and our wood is sold unto us, but we have no more any gold and silver to buy withal!" Thus rejoicing and lamenting, with terror in his eyes, and a smile on his wan lip, the alchemist hung upon the heels of the stranger, as he strode up the cavern, now venturing to fondle his arm, and now starting back, like some caressing hound at the impatient gesture of his master.

The student, in the meantime, burning with curiosity to obtain a view of the object of all this dread and adulation, could hardly restrain himself till they had passed by. When they were fairly beyond his lurking place, however, he put forth his head, but could see only a tall and stately form marching on gravely and sedately, and by the force of contrast making the spare figure and feverish motions of the alchemist appear mean and ridiculous. David crept out of his vault almost unconsciously, and followed the ill-assorted

pair till he had gained the next recess ; whence, encouraged by success, he made another, and another sortie, till, thus hanging upon their skirts, he found himself securely nixed within a few yards of the table. This proceeding seems more natural than honourable ; but the student had in reality no object but that of obtaining a distinct view of the stranger ; and it was not till retreat had become impossible, that he remembered the anxiety of Messire Jean, and even of his daughter, to prevent his overhearing what might pass at the interview.

“ And so, old friend,” said the stranger as he threw down his ponderous sword upon the table, with a noise which made the cavern ring, and the adept leap from the ground—“ still burrowing under the earth ? still at the great work ? still striving to cut off the raven’s head ? Ha ? ” He turned full round as he spoke ; and David, who had expected to behold a Gorgon’s face, was surprised to see instead, a handsome and noble physiognomy, where the traces of five or six-and-forty years only served to give precision to features that in a woman would have been called beautiful. His plain cloak, falling open, showed a black cuirass beneath, uncovered by a coat of arms ; and his hat, unfashionably low in the crown, and strengthened by plates of steel, proved its wearer to be a man who cared more for safety than show. The symmetry of his form, however, his well-knit limbs, and soldierly bearing, proclaimed at the same time that he had as little need as any knight of the age of artificial defences ; and David Armstrong acknowledged to himself—for it would not have become his border blood to have acknowledged more—that if he could venture to disobey the damsel’s command, and answer to the scriptural battle-ery of her father, he would need all the little diversion which the latter could give to make up for the difference in the length of their weapons.

“ I am here, even as thou seest,” said the adept, in reply to Prelati’s questions, “ but for how long, who can tell ? I have wasted my substance, till I have no longer wherewithal to live ; I have molten my gold and my silver in yonder cauldron, and the product hath been smoke and ashes. My daughter crieth for bread, and behold there is none in the house ! Truly, I am sore vexed because of mine iniquities. What saith the Scripture ? ‘ He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes ! ’ ”

"I am sorry for you," said Prelati, mildly, "Do you believe that I am one whose words, for good or for evil, are sure to come true?"

"Yea, I believe, even as the angels."

"Or rather as the devils—for, while believing, you tremble. Well; I will assist you;" and nodding his head mysteriously, he sunk his voice to a whisper, as he repeated, "I will assist you!" The eyes of the adept dilated as he heard, his face was lighted up with wonder and joy, and seizing the cloak of his friend, he kissed the hem.

"Then thou hast succeeded?" cried he; this comes of thy wanderings in foreign lands, where hidden things may be gathered from the boughs like unto the fruit of the tree of knowledge! O wonderful man, how the nations will honour thee! And thou, thy head is still calm, thy heart still true; thou hast not forgotten thy servant in the midst of thy glory; but comest in the night-time, to bring comfort to the desolate cave of him who first launched there in quest of that mystic stone which thou alone hast had the strength and skill to discover. Go to, why should we lose time? there are still some trifles left of my substance. Must it be gold? Come, how many bags shall I bring?" and, seizing the bellows, he began to blow the furnace with a dexterity which had already procured for his fraternity, among the profane, the name of *souffleurs*.

"Your thoughts gallop, my good friend," said Prelati, speaking slowly, "I have given up the search."

"God of Jacob!" cried the stunned adept, as the bellows fell from his hand.

"But never look so dismal," pursued the other; there are things in nature,—or out of it, for that matters not,—more high, more grand, more mighty than the Philosopher's Stone!" Messire Jean groaned and shook his head, and bit, till the blood sprang, the infatuated tongue that had named the name of gold to the ears of Prelati.

"Listen," continued his friend, "and leave off your grinnings and chatterings. Do you remember the nucleus of your wealth? of that same gold of which you vaunt so proudly! of those heavy bags that cumber the closet on the left hand of your subterranean parlour; to the door of which, by the same token, you turn your face, when you would persuade yourself you are praying to Jehovah?"

"I do, I do," replied the adept, growing paler than ever,

"but God hath forgotten my transgression, because of my prayers and alms, and why should man remember it?"

"Then you remember," persisted Prelati, "the noble Gilles de Laval, lord of Retz, and of a hundred other lordships besides, whom, under pretext of guiding in his research after the Hermetic stone—"

"As God is my judge," interrupted the adept, "it was no pretext. But he was wild, and wilful, and impious, given to strange women, and a contemner of holy things. What could come of such fellowship? What bootied my fastings and prayers? I tell thee, I led him not astray, although I left him by the way side."

"Right," said Prelati with composure, "he was impious, he was unfit to be your associate in the holy work, and therefore you robbed and forsook him."

"It was my wages—it was my wages—as thy soul liveth, it was my wages! And yet, nevertheless, I have prayed until the Lord hath heard me; I have fasted till my bones pierce my flesh; and to this day I continue to give alms every year to the amount of the interest of the moneys. Wait a little while, and I shall pass by like a cloud. What would it avail thee to betray a man like me?"

"Fool," exclaimed Prelati, with a growl like that of a tiger, "if I wanted to betray you, why should I take so much trouble? Were you even as immaculate as you are dishonest, were you even a seeker of God instead of gold, what more have I to do than name your name, or even point with my finger, to have you and your daughter torn to pieces, the fragments burnt with fire, and their ashes scattered upon the winds of heaven?"

The interest which David Armstrong took in the conference, became at this point so strong, that he could hardly restrain himself from rushing out of the recess to compel Prelati, at the point of the knife, to explain what was the strange and awful fate which seemed to envelope, not only the alchemist, but even so fair and innocent a being as his daughter. Messire Jean himself seemed to be moved by some feeling different from the abject fear which had hitherto paralysed him. Instead of wringing his hands, he now ground and crushed his fingers within each other; his chattering teeth were firmly locked; his eye emitted a baleful glare, which seemed to illuminate the whole face; and he looked round the cavern with the half fierce, half terrified, air of a hunted beast who

contemplates turning to bay. The student expected every instant to hear the war-signal burst from his lips; but David's heart had sworn to the damsel, and he was determined religiously to keep the oath.

The adept's courage, however, proved to be not in action, but in endurance; or else his policy suggested that it would be better to sacrifice, if need were, a portion of his gold, than to risk every thing on the doubtful issue of a battle. He withdrew his eyes from the distance, where the young Scot, doubtless, appeared in his imagination, with the dagger ready in his grasp; his hands fell lifeless by his side; his jaw collapsed; and his head dropped upon his bosom.

"Thou sayest it," exclaimed he, in a tone of despair, "I and mine are in the palm of thine hand!"

"Then why," said Prelati, "will you doubt a friendship which is proved by the very fact of your standing there, at this moment, safe and sound?" He had watched the changes in his manner with the interest which an angler bestows upon the struggles of a fish which he has hooked; and now that all was calm, he glided without an effort into his usual mildness of tone.

"Gilles de Laval," continued he, "deserted by you, and baffled by the want of virtue of which you justly complain, has abandoned a search which only the pure and religious can prosecute with advantage; and in lieu thereof he was taken to a higher and mightier study, in which a trifle of the kind is no obstacle. Gold is a means with him, not an end, as with you; and he has fallen upon another mode, more easily attainable than the philosopher's stone, of obtaining riches, grandeur, honour, length of days, and dominion over the minds and fortunes of men. In this sublime science, his master is—"

"Prelati," cried the adept.

"No—a friend."

"Then, as my soul liveth, it is the Evil One—the Adversary—yea, Satan himself!" Prelati emitted a Sardonic laugh at this sally, which writhed his fine feature into an expression of mockery instead of mirth.

"Call him by what name you will," said he, "that matters little to my errand. A certain length has been gained, and at a vast expense; but more gold is wanting, and the ready money of the lord de Retz is exhausted. Now hearken, for the assistance I promised to render you is this. Lend—

mark me—*lend* the sum that is necessary ; and you shall not only have good interest, but a free pardon from the lord de Retz, and permission, through his interest with his sovereign, the Duke of Brittany, to settle at Nantes (whither all your family have gone) when it shall become necessary for your safety to leave Paris."

The alchemist heard this proposal with less dismay than might have been expected from his character ; but it was only what he had anticipated, and his mind was the more easily made up to the sacrifices, as it seemed to open out to him a possibility of leaving Paris with safety, which he had determined to do the instant he knew that his tormentor was alive. When his friend, however, mentioned a sum, really very considerable, but enormously extravagant to the imagination of the adept, he emitted a cry, like a wild beast struck by the hunter.

"Think of it," said Prelati coolly, "there is no hurry : I shall come again to-morrow at mid-day, and, to prevent any risk of discovery, I shall enter by your dwelling, upon the surface of the earth."

"Come not in the day-time," gasped the adept, "come at night, and even here, if thou wouldst not destroy me utterly !"

"Before night I leave Paris." Messire Jean again wrung his hands.

"Besides the money," continued Prelati, "I want something else, with which I know you can supply me. I want a youth who understands the operations of chemistry, and who is also daring and enthusiastic. Know you such a one ?"

"I did," said the adept, with a look of horror, "I knew two ; I gave them to you, one after the other ; and I have heard that they are both dead !"

"Why that is precisely the reason that another is wanted. Of what use are the dead to me ? come, will you serve me ? will you pleasure me ?"

"My money ! my soul !" cried Messire Jean. "Let the day perish wherein I was born ! Good friend, what is this you require of me ? Doth my dead wife still bring forth male children, that, like Saturnus, I may devour them up, one by one ? Lo, I am here a solitary beggar, and you say unto me, Where be your moneys ? where be your young men ?"

"You were not wont to drink wine at night," said Prelati drily, pointing to the cup, "nor to address commands and

cautions to yourself," taking up the recipe from the floor. "But why this distrust? A pupil of yours must be skilful in his business, and he must also possess a portion of that daring enthusiasm which is indispensable to me. In the service to which I destine him, a youth like this cannot fail to rise to wealth and distinction. Come, we shall be better friends to-morrow; we shall once more have a confidential talk in your subterranean parlour, and the little Hebe—zounds! your daughter must by this time have grown quite a young woman! Has her beauty kept its promise? Does love begin yet to peep out of her dark infidel eyes?"

"My money! my soul! my daughter!" groaned the adept, tossing up his arms wildly. His eyes began again to glare, his teeth to clench, and his maddening look to wander round the cavern.

"Will you serve me? will you pleasure me?" repeated Prelati.

"What is it thou demandest," said Messire Jean, hoarsely, "My money for thy need?—the gold that I have gathered with the sweat of my brow, with the vigils of the weary night, and the hunger of the dreary day! I say unto thee again, what is it thou demandest? My young man for thy bondman—the staff of my feeble age, and the lamp of my feet; aye, even the young man David," and he raised his voice so as to be heard at the extremity of the cavern, "the true and the brave, who, were he here, would smite thee where thou standest! And yet a third time I say unto thee, What is it thou demandest? My daughter for thy bed—the virgin hope of my house for thy concubine! Man of Belial! if thou hast neither shame nor remorse, art thou yet a fool as well as an incarnate fiend? Knowest thou not that the trodden worm will writhe up again? and am I less than a worm that creepeth on his belly? Thou shalt have no gold—no young man—no daughter! Challenge, and I will answer; strike, and I will strike thee again; back, robber, murderer, ravisher! I spit at, and defy thee!" and darting like lightning upon the sword of Prelati, which lay upon the table, he whirled it away with preternatural strength, while his shout rang like a trumpet, through the cavern, "To your tents, O Jacob! To your tents, O Israel!"

Prelati looked like a man amazed by a show, rather than a reality. The adept had seized a hammer, and stood upon his defence, glaring upon his enemy, with eyes dilated so widely as to take in at the same time the whole area of the

place, while he waited, in fearful suspense, for the appearance of his ally. Some moments passed—all was silence!

"You are not accustomed to drink wine at night," said Prelati, calmly,—“you are feverish. Or is this a trick, a jest? Are we to be merry? Ha?”

"Verily it is a jest," answered the adept, "yea, verily;" and the hammer dropped from his hand, and he staggered against the wall of the furnace, and broke into a hollow laugh, which shook him like a convulsive fit, without changing a single muscle of his countenance.

"But it is not all a jest," added he, regaining his presence of mind, before his physical energies were sufficiently recovered to enable him to stand upright; "Good friend, thou didst try me sorely, and my spirit wandered, and a dream of deliverance came upon my soul; and, like the woman of old, I saw, as it were, gods ascending out of the earth. But alas! it was all a lie and a mockery; the Holy One is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by visions. Thou hast conquered, and I yield—lo! I am the captive of thy bow and of thy spear. Come to me to-morrow as thou wilt, at the noon of day or of night, either on or under the earth; and show unto me thy commands, that I may make haste to obey."

"Be it so," said Prelati, "take the lamp, and show me to the door." He lifted up his fallen weapon as they went, drew forth the blade, and followed the trembling alchemist sword in hand. On reaching the last of the lateral vaults, to which his keen eye had no doubt traced the glance of the seer during his vision of deliverance, he took the lamp in his own hand, and went in; leaving messire Jean at the entrance in a state of mind more easy to conceive than describe. When he emerged again, to the inexpressible wonder of his friend, there was neither blood upon his sword, nor fury in his looks; and immediately conceiving that David must have found some means of escape, the adept ventured the question—"Whom seekest thou?"

"Your gods, old heathen!" replied Prelati, retracing his steps up the cavern, in order to search the vaults *seriatim*.

The student, in the meantime, had witnessed the foregoing stormy scene with varying emotions. The character of the old man, it appeared, was any thing but immaculate; but yet the extremity of his wrongs, and the unexpected spirit he had at last displayed, invested him with a species of dignity,

which covered the rags of his unrighteousness as with a cloak. David's feelings, however, were so far divided, that when he saw there was no risk of his sustaining bodily injury, he watched with a pleasure, not very different from that of a mischievous boy, the new suspense and consternation into which he was thrown. But when it appeared to be Prelati's intention to search the whole cavern, our student had something else to do with his thoughts.

Sorely was he tempted to stand the hazard of the die. It would be no transgression of the damsel's commands; for in this case the battle would be forced upon him by the enemy, an alternative highly agreeable to the bellicose propensities of one who was at the same time a student of the university and a border Scot. But on the other hand, there was the risk of being beaten—of which, however, he persuaded himself the chance was not great; since, without the smallest scruple, he had determined, in the event of a conflict, to run in upon his better armed opponent, before he could be kept at bay with his mighty sword, and stab him in the embrace. If beaten, however, the fruits he should reap from the struggle would be disgrace, if not death; and even if he gained the day, his opima spolia would be at best but the arms of the conquered; for the death of Prelati, instead of unveiling, would seal, perhaps for ever, the mystery which enveloped the adept and his daughter. Upon the whole, David Armstrong, after weighing the pros and cons maturely, although in less time than we take to state them, determined that it would be his wisest plan to embrace the opportunity now offered him of entering without rudeness the penetralia of the house. There he would no doubt meet with something to solve the enigma which perplexed him; and there, at any rate, he would be able to demand the thanks of the damsel for having obeyed her commands.

In pursuance of this resolution, he no sooner perceived that Prelati was fairly engulfed in another of the recesses, than, darting from his ambush, he flew as swiftly, but as stealthily, as a cat to the small door, and made his escape from the cavern unobserved.

He found himself in a kind of vestibule, from which there were several openings, and one steep ladder-like stair, ascending till it was lost in darkness. The place was dimly lighted by a lamp fixed to the wall, and the adventurer having no means of guiding his steps, plunged at random into one of

the gulfs beside him, the entrance of which had somewhat more the appearance of a doorway than the others. This proved to be a passage leading into a room, which was, no doubt, the parlour spoken of by Prelati; and here, by the light of a silver lamp which hung from the ceiling, the wondering student beheld a scene of magnificence, such as he had never heard of, except in the tales of the minstrels and fabliers.

The earthen floor was covered with a stuff which might have served for the coat-of-arms of a prince; and the walls were hung, on one entire side, with cloth of gold, and on the others, with carpets and tapestries of the richest description. Here there was a mirror, so extravagantly large for the period, that it might have shown the entire bust; and there a portrait on velvet, the frame of which glittered with gold and gems. Some of the stools were square, in the form of a chest, and covered with silk and embroidery; others were supported on pillars carved and gilded. The benches, from five to twenty feet long, were ornamented with figures, in carved work, representing the heads of various birds and beasts; and one vast bed, more than twelve feet square, and ascended by a carpeted flight of steps running its entire length, was covered with a counterpane, silk on one side, and precious fur on the other.

These articles, however, amazed the student more by their number than their rarity; and he was not altogether confounded, till he observed the princely luxury of an *arm-chair*; an invention which he had lately heard of as the *ne plus ultra* of modern voluptuousness; and which was still very rarely seen out of royal palaces. It was covered with vermilion leather, ornamented with golden roses; and its fringes of silk were fastened with gold nails.

Notwithstanding all this display of wealth, however, there reigned throughout the apartment a kind of incongruity which struck David, unaccustomed as he was to such sights, with surprise. The furniture did not match. The articles seemed individual specimens, rather than sets; and he asked himself, whether he was in the private dwelling of a man of princely fortune; or in a warehouse appropriated to everything most rare and costly? He had no time, however, to consider of the question; for at the moment the voice of the adept in the vestibule made him start like a man threatened with detection in the midst of a crime. For one moment he was determined

to confront the master, into whose secrets he was plunging so recklessly, and, with such explanation as he could give, demand a safe conduct to the upper world; but the next, as the idea flashed upon him, that what he had already done, might be the means of dissolving finally his connexion with the family, he stepped suddenly behind a screen, with some indefinite view of obtaining speech of the damsel before departing. This movement was hardly completed when messire Jean entered the room.

"And take care," said he, continuing to speak, "that thou withdraw the bolt before thou descendest. Perchance some son of a dog may be prowling about, even now, for our destruction; and so, when he thinketh to climb down upon us, he will surely fall into the pit. And haste thee, my daughter, for it is now the middle watch of the night; and verily, mine eyelids are as heavy as my heart, and my limbs bend beneath my body, even as my spirit fainteth under its troubles. The unbelieving villain!" he went on aloud, after having shut the door, and drawn a strong breath, like a fugitive who finds himself in an accustomed place of safety: "Be there still whales within the deep, to swallow up, and spue forth again, their prey upon the dry land? Why did I throw away his sword? Why trust to the arm of a stranger, when I might have stabbed him where he stood? But a day shall come round—the day of the Lord is at hand! No more, indeed, the lion of the tribe of Judah goeth up from the prey; but Dan is still a serpent by the way, an adder in the path!" The old man's face grew calmer and paler as he spoke; the perspiration dried upon his brow; and he walked several paces up the room with a noiseless but determined step.

Soon, however, his mind seemed to revert to its usual occupations. He was evidently preparing to retire for the night; and, after having opened the door of a closet, where his bed appeared to be placed, he sank down upon his knees to pray. In his prayer, which was delivered with energy and deep devotion, the student joined mentally; and as the form of supplication was not peculiar to the personages of our history, but common to many of those who were in that day engaged in similar pursuits, we think it well to present the reader with the following copy:

"O God! almighty, eternal, from whom cometh every good thing, and every perfect gift! Grant me a knowledge, I beseech thee, of that universal wisdom which is around thy

throne; which created all things, and which sustaineth and preserveth all things. Deign to send it unto me from heaven, which is thy sanctuary, and the throne of thy glory, to the end that it be in, and work in me. For it is that divine wisdom which is mistress of all celestial and occult arts, and of the science and understanding of all things. By its spirit may I possess the true intelligence! May I proceed infallibly in the noble art to which I have consecrated myself, even in the search of the miraculous secret which thou hast hidden from the world, in order to reveal it to thine elect! May I commence, pursue, and achieve the great work which I have to do here below, and enjoy it for ever! In fine, O God, grant me, I beseech thee, the celestial Stone, angular, miraculous, and eternal!"

When the adept had finished his supplications, he look up a book, the binding of which, in the gorgeous fashion of the day, was studded with gold and gems; and, laying it upon a small table near the screen, drew in a stool, and began to read some portion inwardly, apparently as a sequel to the religious service of the night. David would fain have raised his head over the screen, to look what the manuscript was; for a strange misgiving, he hardly knew of what nature, had been gradually stealing upon his mind. The book, he could say with certainty, was not a church missal, neither had it any resemblance to a religious homily. The very characters in which it was written, from the single and distant glance he had obtained, were strange—nay, suspicious to his eye! But in the midst of this new dilemma, the door opened, as if by a spring; his eyes dazzled; and he knew by the beating of his heart, and by his thickening breath, that the damsel was in the room.

She stood motionless upon the floor, her head reverently bowed, and her hands drooping at her sides. David forgot the vague suspicions that had begun to gather like a kind of horror upon his soul, and he enjoyed, for the first time in his life, a full and uninterrupted gaze at this phantom shape which had haunted him so long. The serene gravity, just touching upon melancholy, which was the habitual character of her face, tinged at this moment by religious feeling, acquired an air almost of sublimity, without losing any of its sweetness; and her pale and placid features looked as if they were shone upon by a stream of sunlight. The youth felt his pity and admiration mingled with awe while he gazed; and when the

old man at length raised his head, and his daughter bowed herself almost to the earth before him, in the form of salutation peculiar to the oriental nations, David could have fancied that the whole scene, so strange in locality and expression, and so touching in sentiment, was but the fragment of a dream.

"And now, my child," said the alchemist, "get thee to bed at once, and may the God of our fathers be thy guard! But yet another word. The young man—verily I am worn out with strife and watching—even the young man Strong-arm, he no doubt escaped by thy means, when the heathen dog was exploring the vaults. Thou leddest him up the stair without permitting him to enter here, where the sight even of this holy book might give our bodies to the fire, and our ashes to the winds of heaven?" At these questions the damsel appeared for a moment to be ready to sink to the ground, overwhelmed with surprise and dismay.

"All is safe," said she at last, and in a voice steady enough to deceive her father in the present exhausted state of his faculties.

"It is well," he rejoined, "thou art brave and quick-witted, but thou hast a woman's pity, and a woman's trust, and even if he had made the discovery, I fear thou wouldst have permitted him to live." During this speech David could see, through the minute chink which had hitherto served him, that the damsel's eyes were rivetted upon the screen with a glance of mingled threatening and terror. Enough, however, had occurred to stimulate his curiosity and suspicion to a pitch of madness; and when the old man was in the act of extinguishing the lamp, giving way to the natural recklessness of his character, he suddenly raised his head over the screen, and fixed his eyes upon the volume. The next moment all was dark; and as the scene fled from the scholar's vision, he leaned back against the wall, and was only preserved from fainting by the iron strength of his constitution.

The reader has perceived long ago, that the alchemist and his daughter were of the Hebrew nation; thus exhibiting a knowledge of national character which it was impossible for the scholar to possess. Among a people at once simple and poor a Jew could not exist, to say nothing of the shrewd sagacity attributed to our countrymen; and accordingly, the weary foot of Israel had found little or no resting place, on the barren mountains and desolate heaths of Scotland. In

France, a law had passed during the last reign, which banished the entire tribe from the kingdom, on pain of instant death; and thus, David had in all probability never seen, to his knowledge, a descendant of the patriarchs in his life. The seclusion and mystery observed by messire Jean, as he thought proper to call himself, were easily accounted for, by the persecutions to which philosophers of his mystic school were liable; and the oriental form of his phraseology was perhaps calculated rather to lull than excite suspicion, familiar as it had become to the student's ear, in its association with his theological studies. David, brave and ardent as he was himself, could form no conception of the species of enthusiasm which impelled the alchemist thus to bury himself alive, rather than break off in the midst the mysterious search to which he was devoted, and which, every day, appeared on the eve of being crowned with success. The feelings, therefore, which had beset him this night, were of so indefinite a nature, that he was probably not aware himself, of the nature of his suspicions, till they were confirmed by the instantaneous glance he had caught of the Jewish Talmud.

His sickness of heart, accompanied by "an horror of great darkness," continued for some time, and he had not yet been able to collect his bewildered senses, when he felt himself drawn out from his lurking place by a small, cold, but steady hand. David trembled at the touch. He felt as if his soul was in the grasp of a demon, but he had no power to struggle. When they had gained the vestibule, the damsel took down the lamp from the wall, and pointing to the steep stair, rudely cut out of the living rock, she motioned him to ascend, while she lighted his steps.

They went on for some considerable space in silence, till they reached a kind of landing-place. Here the stair ended, and from this, the communication with the world above was by a suspended ladder; upon which David was about to step mechanically, when he was withheld by his conductress.

"First swear," said she, "that thou wilt not reveal even to thy bosom friend, what hath this night come to thy knowledge."

"Tempt me not," answered the student, hardly knowing what he said, "I will not swear."

"Swear," repeated the damsel, sinking her voice to a whisper, "swear, if thou wouldst live! My father's life is

in the palm of thine hand; were it mine own I would trust thee without an oath."

"I swear," said the student.

"By Him whom thou namest thy Redeemer?"

"By Him crucified!" said David bitterly; and, bowing his head, he made the sign of the cross upon his bosom.

"Then go in peace, and may the God of the Jew and the Christian go with thee!" David grasped the ladder with an unsteady hand, and mounted the first step; when the damsel touching a spring concealed in the wall, the portion of the landing-place on which he had just stood gave way, and swung, by means of hinges, in what appeared to be an unfathomable abyss. David looked for a moment at the danger from which his oath had saved him; and then, bestowing upon the Jewess a parting glance, in which admiration and despair struggled with religious horror, he ascended the ladder into the dwelling-house above, and, groping his way to the door, staggered out into the night.

CHAPTER V.

WE are told by certain philosophers that the human body undergoes a perpetual process of change, and that a man, at different epochs of his life, so far as the *material* is concerned, is thus absolutely a different individual. The revolutions of the mind, on the other hand, although they are much more apparent, do not affect its individuality. We may receive a new bone or a new muscle, without perceiving the trick which nature puts upon us; but when one set of sentiments takes the place of another, we are conscious that it is merely a change and not a renewal.

We may illustrate this by the example at the present moment nearest at hand. When David Armstrong went to bed after parting with the Jewess, he felt as if the world had passed away from him like a scroll, and as if he himself was a single solitary atom, dancing unseen and unknown in immeasurable space. When we meet with him again in the morning, he is calculating whether it will be *worth his while* to pursue his search after the philosopher's stone with his

present master, seeing that this individual was an unbelieving Jew, such as God would, in all probability, consider unworthy of success. Yet David is all the time the same intellectual being.

His air and manner on this morning were so slightly different as to evoke no observation on the part of his college companions; and the deliberate yet energetic pace with which he usually traversed the hill of St. Genéviève, was as deliberate and energetic as ever. There was, notwithstanding, *some* change, though slight, as well in the outward as in the inner man of the scholar. His face was a shade paler, and his ragged hood hung over his shoulders with even more of blackguardism than yesterday. In his whole person, in fact, he might be said to have somewhat more the look of a desperado than heretofore; while throughout the day there was exhibited a kind of exaggeration even in his most ordinary feelings which sometimes both surprised and annoyed Sir Archibald Douglas.

The knight had given due reflection to the case of his friend, and had arranged a plan for bringing him forward in the career of arms, besides turning his present services to account in a very important matter which related to himself. Their new meeting, besides, was in the morning and in a palace, not in a ruin and in the dark; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that the gaze which he bestowed upon the student's figure, was as full of mirth as of renewed astonishment. David, whose satisfaction, in ordinary cases, was expressed by what may be called a brightening of the face rather than a smile, and who was never, on any occasion, provoked to laugh outright, suffered himself with great gravity to be turned round by his friend, and surveyed from head to heel.

"And now, Archibald," said he, "if your curiosity is satisfied, let us hear at once the newest gibes on the dress of a poor scholar, and then we may proceed at once to the purpose of our conference without more grimaces."

"Let me laugh, then, once for all," replied his friend, "and then I shall be as solemn as yourself. O what a sight were this for the old wives of the Border, whose fire-side stories are still warm with the deeds of Philip Armstrong! Off, ye rags!"—and he tore down suddenly a large fragment of the hood. "Away with your spider's webs, for here are steel and leather in exchange!"

"Permutatio Diomedis et Glaucis," said the scholar; "it

would be the exchange of golden armour for brass. Yet, nevertheless, I am in nowise bigotted to a particular garb. As for the hood—let it go; although I will not say that it might not have been becomingly worn for some while yet. Neither, Archibald, was it any thing like the weavings of that Lydian lass, Arachne, to which you liken it, as many a tug and haul which it bore in its day will testify. You must know it was the true *epitogium*, and was absolutely indispensable *ad loquendum in universitate*; without it I could not have opened my mouth. In the day-time it was a garment; in the night-time a blanket; and whatever rents it had were received in defending my skin. Well, well, old friend, fare thee well in God's name!"

"A most moving epitaph; and now for the interment in yonder heap of ashes in the fire-place."—

"Hold!" cried the scholar, "it may still serve to mend the gown it once ornamented;" and, folding up the rag carefully, he put it into his pocket.

"I have said," continued he, "that I care not for the form of a garment, and it is even so: yet the profession of a student affords me certain privileges which are useful; and above all things, it is an ostensible employment which draws off, from my goings out and comings in, the prying eyes of the world. But for these circumstances I should prefer a steel jacket to a scholar's gown."

"And what harm are you about that you should dread the eyes of the world?"

"The greatest harm imaginable. I am about surpassing the rest of the world, or at least attempting to do so, in a species of knowledge which would make me at once the envy and the victim of my fellow-men. But you cannot comprehend me. You are ignorant of the progress of science and discovery. The affinities, the attractions, the antipathies which exist in physical objects, you either pass unobserved, or attribute them to the power of magic. The influence of the stars, felt by all nature, both animate and inanimate, you confine to the vast ocean. You believe what you see, but will believe nothing on even the most direct and infallible deduction."

"I believe this, my dear friend, that you are talking very learnedly; but, for the life of me, I cannot tell on what subject."

"You believe," continued the scholar, "that what exists

was made; and you must therefore believe that there is an art of making it. To the ordinary species of knowledge we are permitted an easy access; but to the higher and more sublime, we can only attain through the intermediate steps of science, and by the direct favour of God. In natural history, for instance, we know that sulphur and quicksilver are the bases of all the metals; while astrology teaches us that the formation of each is presided over by a particular planet: that of gold, by the sun; of silver, by the moon; of copper, by Venus; of tin, by Jupiter; of lead, by Saturn; of iron, by Mars; and of quicksilver, by Mercury. We know these things, not as possibilities, but as sure and certain facts; and the necessary deduction is, that when natural philosophy and astrology are completely understood, the man who is permitted by heaven to attain to such divine knowledge will be able to convert the baser into the more precious metals at will."

"Then you are an alchemist?" said the knight, with some surprise.

"I am an humble chemist, striving to attain to the perfection of his art, which is called alchemy. Still another grimace? What, may I ask, do *you* believe?"

"I believe that the precious metals were given to the world merely to stimulate valour and industry. The artizan labours for them with his hands; the merchant, with his peddling craft; and the knight, with his good sword: and God will never permit so wise a system to be overturned by the alchemists. As for the stars, I believe, according to Scripture, that they were intended for nothing else than lamps to enlighten the earth."

"According to Scripture, O ignorance! 'Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?' But to argue is vain. Astrology is a science built entirely upon experience, and must therefore be cast down by facts, not disputations. It existed in the days of Job, and it exists in ours. Nothing can be simpler, and yet more incomprehensible. Why a planet being at one distance from the zodiac rather than another, or why entering a house or region of one sign, rather than another, it should influence or foretell certain fortunes to him at whose birth it presided, it is impossible to understand. Astrology, however, by a series of experiences carried down from age to age, establishes the fact; and with this we must be satisfied. 'Knowest thou the or-

dinances of heaven?" saith the Scripture, 'Canst thou set the dominion thereof on the earth? Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea; or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? By what way is the light parted which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?'—Alas! the very utmost height to which even the alchemist can hope to attain, is the substratum of knowledge, composed of facts, the meaning and origin of which are hidden in impenetrable darkness. Beyond this, all the learning of Nigidius Figulus himself would be foolishness."

"As for Nigidius Figulus," said the young knight, who now foresaw the demolition of his plans by means of the stars, "he bears but a heathenish name, and I thank the Virgin I know nothing about him—although I can readily believe his learning to be foolish enough."

"Hold!" cried the scholar indignantly, "Nigidius Figulus was the most learned man in the most learned age of the world; he was the superior even of the prodigious Varro—the friend of Cicero, and the first natural philosopher and astrologer of the time! It was he who read in the stars the fate of Octavius, and foretold that he should be master of the empire. But what avails all this to such as you? Can pearls be appreciated by——"

"Swine. Never mince the word. Were you a soldier, it might be dangerous; but a moping student, who passes his life in dreaming of the stars, and reading Nigidius Fig-fiddle,—what is his name?—may use any pearls of eloquence he pleases." David's lip grew as rigid as marble, and he strode through the room with the air of a moss-trooper; while his long black gown, soiled and torn, and the remaining rags of the hood streaming down his back, gave a touch of the ridiculous to his anger.

"Archibald of the Braes," said he, stopping suddenly short, and confronting his friend, "you have yourself assisted to unfrock me. Beware that I do not complete the work, and thus throw aside altogether the protection of my scholar's garb!"

"Over God's forbode!" cried the knight, "for, judging of the under by the upper garments, the exposure would be something less than decent. But what is the matter, man? My only offence is, having offered you a dress of steel and leather instead of these miserable rags—having endeavoured to turn you from a starving student into a roystering soldier—

having desired to convert you from heathenism to Christianity—”

“Hold!” interrupted the scholar eagerly, “it is a base, vulgar, and abominable error, to suppose that the sciences we talk of are included in the anathemas of the church. They are neither vain, conjectural, nor erroneous, but essentially founded on experience and calculation; and in the synodal statute to which you refer, *De Sortilegiis*—”

“Bah! I know nothing of such trumpery; I only say that this *Nigulus Figforus*—But, holy St. Bride, what noise is that? Have the English rallied, and retaken the city, or are the poor students at it again?”

“Touching the statute *De Sortilegiis*,” persisted David; but his voice was drowned in a shout which burst from an immense crowd now flooding the street opposite the windows; and, following his friend, who had bounced out of the room without ceremony, he took hold of his arm, and while they shouldered their way through the mass, continued a defence of the orthodoxy of the sublime sciences, of which the knight heard not one syllable.

The crowd consisted, not only of the usual rabble of the street, but also of persons of the upper ranks, who lent their voices like the others, to swell the din. In the middle a line of horsemen—if men they could be called—broke slowly through the living surge, singing, shouting, leaping, and discharging squibs, crackers, and other fire-works. Most of them were in the garb of beasts, stuffed, as it were, into the skins of the animals they represented; but instead of the head, some hideous and extravagant face grinned from their shoulders, and was surmounted by a pair of enormous horns, which proclaimed the wearers to be devils. Mingling with these, several personages appeared with cowls and tonsured crowns; but instead of the robes of priests, their dress was white; their heads were ornamented with asses’ ears, and in one hand they held a green or yellow conical cap, while in the other they flourished a bauble decorated with bells.

“It is an announcement of the brotherhood of the Passion,” said David, “It is thus the citizens are invited to attend their representations at the hospital of the Trinity.”

“Accepted for two,” cried the young knight joyously, “See what it is to travel! By St. Bride, they will hardly believe me in Scotland, when I tell them of these doings!”

“The cost is two sous,” said David, with a sigh.

"It matters not."

"Each!"

"Were it twice the sum, you and I shall make two of the company."

"Well, you will need a friend at your elbow; and it may be, that you will find me worth the money. But take notice, Archibald, that I go entirely upon your invitation, and for your behoof; and that the said amount is to be set down to me neither as a loan nor as a gift. And in troth," continued he, rubbing his hands when the affair was settled, "you say well, that the folks of the Borders would hardly believe you! Why, it was only in the reign of Charles's father,—poor demented creature, whom God can hardly condemn, since he did not vouchsafe him reason for a guide,—that the brotherhood of the Passion became what they are to-day. Before that time, some miserable farces were played upon the streets by the jongleurs, with fiddles, and bells, and drums, and shouting of profane songs; but to-day we have a regular theatre, and magnificent scenery, where the most sublime mysteries are performed by a whole convent of actors, most of them sworn ecclesiastics."

"I have seen that same brotherhood," said the knight, "I have seen whole wagon loads of them, and their scenery, passing from one town to another, drawn by oxen; and I could desire no better refreshment for a wayfaring man, than to ride by their side, and listen to the songs with which they beguiled their journey, taken from the mystery of the Nativity, or of the Canaaneean."

"Those, my friend, were but strolling players; and, although each troop calls itself the *Confrère* of the Passion, not one of them has any right to the name. The original *Confrérie* was transferred from St. Maur to Paris, in the second year of this century, authorized by letters patent; and so devotedly attached to the divine art did the Parisians become, that it was feared the theatre would eclipse the church, and that men would go to kneel and pray before the scenes of the mimic Passion, instead of attending to the service of the altar. For this reason the hour of vespers was changed, in order that it might not be interfered with by the hour of the play; and if you are devoutly disposed, as I trust you always are, before going to the Trinity, we can take our ghostly comfort at the new temple of St. Julian of the Minstrels, where the mass will not be the worse for good music."

"Agreed, David," said Sir Archibald, "provided you will enjoy with me, in the first place, the carnal comfort of a good dinner in the palace, for it is now mid-day."

"I am not accustomed to dine so early," replied the scholar, "howbeit, as it will cost nothing to either of us, I may as well sit down with you. At the same time, Archibald, if your allowance of vivres should not be fairly enough for both, I charge you do not balk your appetite, seeing that it is my wont to fast till midnight; and while you eat, I can entertain you with some brief account of the origin, scope, and tendency of the synodal statute *De Sortilegiis*."

David's misgivings were not confirmed; for the allowance being proportioned, not to the supposed appetite, but to the knightly rank of the guest, it turned out to be amply sufficient for two men. With an entertainer of inferior station, the student must certainly have had recourse to the expedient proposed, of filling his mouth with hard words; but as it was, he did not utter a single syllable during the meal.

"It were a shame," said he, at length, resting upon his elbows from sheer fatigue, although his knife still maintained its perpendicular, with a threatening edge towards the remains of a couple of roasted fowls, "it were a shame that the guests of a king should not do their devoir, with such truly royal fare before them; but if the circumstance reach the ear of Charles, I trust that most gracious prince will, so far as I am concerned, take the will for the deed; seeing that I am only a poor clerk and scholar, and more accustomed to fast than to feast." David, however, did so wonderfully well for a person of abstemious habits, that the knight amused himself with admiring the prowess of his friend, long after he himself was hors de combat. The fare, to say the truth, was of a quality which our student was but little accustomed to. A few eggs, when their price did not exceed six sous a hundred, or a salted herring in lieu thereof, formed the larger share of his daily comforts at the university; and even his subterranean supper, though so well dressed, and so agreeably served, rarely afforded any thing better than beef, which (together with pork) was the common food of the artizans. On the present occasion, mutton, veal, and fowl, graced the board; and even a small portion of game—a dainty appropriated exclusively by the nobles.

"Come, my friend," cried the knight with that exulting feeling of after-dinner comfort, which in persons of an active,

out-of-doors life, betokens good health; and in others the approach of paralysis or apoplexy—"Come, David, since we have at least done our best to do honour to the king, let us now drink a cup to the health of our ladies!" David winced as if he had been wounded; his jaw fell; and a look, not only of sadness but dismay, clouded suddenly the brightness which had risen into his face.

"It is a custom," said he slowly, "at least of doubtful orthodoxy. In the more ancient authors we find no trace of drinking to the health, although persons sitting together were in the habit of inviting, or challenging one another to the potation—a practice, by the way, forbidden in the capitularies of Charlemagnè. As for drinking the health of the absent, it belongs, I fear me, rather to heathenism than Christianity; for has not toasting the saints themselves been strictly interdicted by the church? It is, indeed, a superstition of the fancy, a libation as it were, to some spiritual form seen by the eyes of the soul—"

"On what look you?" interrupted the knight; for David had turned his head, as if to gaze at some object on the wall.

"Afar of," continued he, "lonely, and bright, and beautiful—rising, like a star, in the desert and impassable waters, a Venus Anadyomene of the heart!"

"Alas!" said the knight with feeling, "you are a priest, and you may not love without sin."

"I am yet unsworn!" replied the student, starting; "and even were it otherwise, it is lawful to doubt upon the subject. Not to talk of the example of many of the disciples and apostles, the marriage of priests was legalized by the Great Council of Nicea; and after that time, the names of Carterius, Sydonius, Simplicius, and a multitude more—all bishops, and all married, give warrant for the practice. Was not the famous and holy St. Gregory the son of a bishop? and in the throne of St. Peter itself, has there not been an Osius, a Boniface, a Felix, a John, an Agapet, a Silvester, all children of ecclesiastics?"* Having finished this speech, David emptied a mighty goblet at one pull, and then filled again.

* Eneas Silvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., during the lifetime of our friend David Armstrong, but a little later than the present date of the story, defended the marriage of priests; declaring eligible to the papal chair, not only a man who had been, but a man who actually was, married—"Non solum qui uxorem habuit, sed uxorem habens, potest assumi."

"Come," cried he, starting wildly from his seat, "where there is so much room for controversy, of what advantage is it to be scrupulous? Though we may not drink to the saints, angels are not included in the interdict! Here, then, to our lady-loves! Here, to the very dregs—were poison at the bottom!" and emptying the measure at a draught as before, he set down the goblet, looking pale and horror-stricken. The knight stared at the vehemence of his friend; but as love is a subject on which all sorts of extravagances both in speech and action are permitted, his surprise did not continue more than a moment. A reaction, however, appeared to take place in David's manner; his spirits sunk; and the generous juice which he had swallowed in an unusual quantity, seemed to have no effect, either in opening his heart or his lips. It was already too late for vespers, but they got up soon after to go to the theatre; the knight not a little disappointed that the turn which he had purposely given to the conversation, had not led to the mutual confidence he desired.

The street St. Denis was crowded by persons of all ranks, whose destination was, like their own, the hospital of the Trinity; and more especially at the openings leading from the great churches or convents, the thoroughfare was almost choked up by tributary streams of population flooding from vespers. The knight and his friend, however, made good their passage with very little delay; David, who recollected his office of guardian and conductor, leading the way with great strides. With his clasped knuckles before him, to serve for a prow, his elbows close to his ribs, and his gown inflated by the wind, he bore steadily on through the crowd, like a ship under full sail. They at length reached the door, and having paid their money, passed through a region of noise, where the spectacle was announced by the beating of drums, and by men bawling at the pitch of their voices, and entered the house.

Sir Archibald, who was thrown into a tumult of wonder and delight by the novelty and magnificence of the scene, overpowered his friend with questions.

"In the name of God," cried he, "what are those vast paintings, that are ranged round the walls?"

"That is the temple of Solomon," replied David, whose spirits seemed to rise with the hurry and excitement around him; "that is the palace of Herod; that is the house of Caiaphas. But hush! hush! there they come; hold your tongues,

will ye? Hurra!" and he and the young knight joined lustily in the general shout, with which the appearance of the actors was hailed by the audience. The whole strength of the troop presented itself upon the floor at one moment; amounting perhaps to a hundred and fifty individuals; but of these a good many were seated, indicating that on this occasion they were not to take any share in the scene. Having thus presented themselves to the company, the prologue was spoken, which finished by requesting silence; and they all withdrew to allow the piece to commence.

The scenery consisted of paradise, hell, and purgatory; as well as numerous earthly habitations: and the personages, besides Jesus and the disciples, Pontius Pilate, &c., included a goodly company of devils, angels, doctors of law, scribes, pharisees, priests, kings, saints, virgins, knights, shepherds, clowns, and thieves. The gates of hell were represented by immense gaping jaws, by which the devils made their entrance and exit, surrounded by smoke and flames. The clowns were habited like those they had seen on the streets, and their jests were frequently directed against the clergy themselves, and couched in language so indecent as would have been tolerated nowhere else than on the stage. The actors being chiefly priests, it is needless to say, that the female parts were performed by boys.

The audience seemed to take the most intense interest in the piece, and to identify themselves completely with the actors. They knelt, they wept, they shouted, they screamed, they beat their breasts, they joined in the chorus, they emitted thunders of laughter and applause. A bad actor, or even a bad action, was received with hisses and groans; but when pleased, the cry of *Be! Be!* (*bis—encore*) resounded through the theatre. The clowns especially received a full portion of the public patronage, but above all—the devils; and at one time almost every individual in that vast multitude might have been heard joining in the burden:

*"Saulce d'enfer, saulce d'enfer,
Aux serviteurs de Lucifer!"*

The knight was in particular surprised by the intimate acquaintance which the audience seemed to possess, not only with the events, but even with the words of the drama. The Parisians, however, were accustomed to see the mysteries per-

formed at processions, and on other public occasions, as well as in the theatre; and even in the provinces, when the number of actors chanced to be short, it was often filled up instantaneously from among the spectators. It was a common occurrence, indeed, either in town or country, when any actor happened to be too slow, or to have altogether forgotten a sentence, for a hundred voices at once either to prompt or anticipate him.

The knight for a considerable time was too much occupied with the actors and the story, to bestow any attention upon the audience; but all on a sudden, his eye appeared to catch some object among the latter, which rivetted his gaze, as by a spell. David, absorbed in the interest of the scene, had hitherto answered his friend's questions, and responded to his acclamations, rather mechanically, than as fully comprehending them; but when these all on a sudden ceased, his mind bestowed that cognizance upon the negative interruption, which it had failed to do upon the positive.

"Will you not look, man?" said he, jogging his companion, "will you not listen? Fye, Archibald! do you reverse the custom of the *Lamia* of Plutarch, and shut up your eyes when you come abroad? See to that ill-favoured goblin with the flame-coloured beard! Hark! thwack! thwack! These were wallops like the echoes of a listed field: and faith, no wonder, for the chiel's shoulders are cased in iron under his leopard's skin. Hear to him now—what a sublime roar! Heard you ever the like of that? Now off, ye villain; vanish, good Lucifer; jump into yonder fiery jaws, and make room for your comrade, Hashmodai, who will by and by bounce out before us from the cinders of hell like a roasted chestnut. There—did I not tell you? *Vadit*, he goes out; *silent minnestrelli*, the music ceases;" and a momentary pause in the action taking place, David had time to follow the direction of his companion's eyes.

"Is it thereabouts, you are?" said he, "A comely lass, as I am a sinner!—with blue eyes that look down kindly yet loftily upon the earth, and hair like an ancient Gaul, whose locks, as Pliny relates, were died by artifice of a still brighter blond than nature had painted. What saith the *Lai de Lanval*?" and he sung the following lines from that popular romance so loudly and so well, as to attract the attention even of the lady concerned:

Flor de lis, et rose novele,
Quant ele pert on tans d'été,
Trespassoit elle de biauté.

When the lady had turned her eyes towards the group whence the voice proceeded, she appeared to be suddenly agitated by some deeper feeling than modesty or bashfulness, for her blush did not merely illumine her cheeks, but overspread both brow and neck. The knight at the same moment pressed his companion's arm fiercely, in token to be silent, while he endeavoured to withdraw his own person into the shade.

"Take away your fingers, Archibald," said the scholar; "it is an evil custom you have—and I would strongly beg of you for the future to express your wishes by word of mouth. But if you still retain the faculty of human speech, tell me, I beseech you, who is he beside the damsel—that tall old man, with the brilliant and benevolent eyes, and beard as white as the drifted snow. The face gleams upon me like some spectral head I must have seen in my dreams; for sure I am it never before appeared to my waking eyes."

"That," replied the knight, "is the famous Orosmandel, an Arabian philosopher, who has travelled ten times farther than Marco Paulo, or Sir John Mandeville, and to whom, in learning, your Nigulus Figulus is a fool. He is, besides, the friend, confidant, and instructor of that magnificent nobleman, the Lord de Retz—"

"Of whose daughter and heiress, the damsel of Laval, I have just now sung the praise?" demanded the scholar.

"Even so; but speak out, man; I cannot read your face, although it is written over with signs as black and deep as the new characters of Guttemburg."

"Anon, anon," replied David, with another meditative gaze at the objects of his curiosity; "but here comes Hashmodai! Look to the stage, Archibald, if you would know what acting is, and what a devil can do!"

The student speedily forgot, not only the Arabian philosopher and the damsel of Laval, but his companion beside him, and he became once more completely absorbed in the interest of the scene. His gestures at length were so extravagant as to attract the notice of Sir Archibald, whose thoughts and eyes were busy enough in another quarter; and unacquainted with the things which had so recently agitated his friend to the very centre, the young knight made the mistake of attributing entirely to wine, effects which were in reality produced by a variety of concurring causes.

The actor who personated Hashmodai was either unwell,

or imperfect in his part; and the voices of the audience were loud both in prompting and condemning him. Among these, the smooth sonorous tones of the student, capable, as one would have thought, of any degree of expansion, were predominant; and at length the pas of criticism seemed to be surrendered to him by universal consent, and his accents were heard, lofty and alone, above the suppressed murmur which filled the theatre. The unhappy performer, confused and alarmed, soon lost all presence of mind; and at the precise point which required the greatest energy, he stopped suddenly in his speech, and stood stock still. The noise was now deafening, some voices prompting, some hissing, some groaning; when, in the midst of all, David Armstrong suddenly bounded through the crowd, leaped upon the stage, tore off the dress from the foundered actor, and clapping his prodigious horns upon his own head, went on with the "maimed rites" of the part, shouting in a voice that rang like thunder through the house:—

"Devils of hell, horned and horrible,
Great and small, with eyes of basilisks,
Infamous dogs! what has become of you?"*

The astonishment with which Sir Archibald beheld this scene was lost in delight; and he joined the loudest of the loud, in the applauses which filled the house. David went on with the part with admirable spirit; and in the passages which actors were accustomed to interpolate of their own authority, he seemed to take the opportunity of easing his heart of a whole load of bitterness. The state, the clergy, and above all, the university, were by times the object of his sarcasms; and in the closing scene, when he bounded into the jaws of hell, and disappeared in smoke and fire, the cheers which echoed through the theatre were the most enthusiastic ever remembered.

When all was over, the spectators, according to a very general custom, rose like one man to demand the re-appearance of the successful actor; and cries of "Hashmodai! Hashmodai!" resounded on all sides. But Hashmodai was gone. He had thrown down his horns behind the scenes,

* *Diables d'enfer, horrible et cornus,
Gros et menus, aux regards basiliques,
Infames chiens, qu'êtes vous devenus?*

Mystery of the Conception.

and continued his run till he escaped from the house, and engulfed himself in the crowd of the street St. Denis. The audience at length retired, in some doubt as to whether the goblin-like figure they had seen was not Hashmodai himself, come express from hell to amuse the inhabitants of the first city in Europe.

CHAPTER VI.

THE disclosure which our young knight had intended to pour into the ear of his selected confidant, is perhaps familiar, by personal experience, to all our readers; but in this instance, it was marked by circumstances peculiar to the age, and, in fact, to the epoch, when, owing to intestine dissensions, and the presence of a foreign enemy at the same time, the wildest confusion reigned throughout the country. These circumstances, however, will of necessity be so amply developed in the course of the following narrative, that at present we shall content ourselves with declaring what is necessary to be known, in as few pages as possible.

When Sir Archibald Douglas of the Braes found himself, at the death of old Sir Archibald, the inheritor of little more than a sword, which had been long famous in the border wars, he determined, like a youth of sense and spirit, to go forth into the world, to push his fortune. At that time, and for centuries before, and after, France was the Canaan of the Scots; and all those who were driven forth by fate or folly into the wilderness, turned their faces toward this land of promise. These adventurers being, without exception, brought up to arms from their infancy, and being, generally speaking, distinguished for military faith as well as valour, never failed to find a welcome from their warlike hosts. The two countries, besides, had been bound together by alliances, or treaties, from time immemorial; and thus when a Scot descended from his mountains, and betook himself to the fertile fields of France, he found that he had only changed his home.

But Sir Archibald had another inducement, already known to the reader. That gallant earl of Douglas (his godfather,

near kinsman, and chief,) who had led over five thousand Scots to the aid of Charles VII., then in the extremity of his distress, had been created, in the year 1424, in testimony of royal gratitude, duke of Touraine. The duke, indeed, was slain in the same year, and so was his son; but the barren title at least remained in the family, and the recollection of such important services could hardly have been obliterated from the mind of the king in the course of thirteen years.

Whatever the knight's resolution, however, might have been, it was his fate to go to France. His outfit was no sooner completed—and, truth to say, it was too slender to require much time—than he was summoned by the influence of his friends to attend the princess Margaret in her journey. This little bud of Scottish royalty, the eldest daughter of James I., had been betrothed to the Dauphin when she was only three years of age; and now, although not more than eleven, she was considered old enough to be married to a lad of thirteen. Sir Archibald, it need hardly be said, obeyed the call with the most joyful alacrity; and, no longer a solitary knight-errant, set out for the land of adventure, in the suite of a princess, the daughter of his king. He would have preferred, no doubt, a command in the military succours which accompanied the expedition, as the dowry of the young bride; but his powerful friends willed it otherwise, and the knight consoled himself with the idea that at a juncture like this, there must be abundance of fighting even in the most peaceable offices, at the court of Charles VII. In explanation of the policy of his friends in this respect, so different from what might have been expected from the house of Douglas, it may be added that it was the singularly handsome person of Sir Archibald, which induced them to choose the court for the scene of his adventures rather than the field.

The circumstances of the journey have nothing to do with our narrative, till the bridal party arrived within a few leagues of the city of Tours, where the royal family of France then resided. Here the little princess was met by numerous groups of the nobility and bourgeois, who came, either by command or to show their zeal, to escort her into the town; and Douglas, with the curiosity of a wandering Scot, set himself to gaze with all his eyes at the strangers. Among the parties who successively approached, there was one which more particularly interested him; consisting of a young lady, at-

tended by a knight clothed from head to foot in complete armour, who did not raise his vizor the whole time.

The female, in the eyes of the young knight, was distinguished from all the rest of her sex, by a peculiar elegance of form and demeanour such as he had never beheld before. The riding dress of ladies of distinction, in that age, as we see in the Colbert manuscript of Monstrelet, was not greatly different from that of the present day. It displayed the shape of the body, and muffled up the feet; but at the neck, instead of rising to the chin, it allowed the rich stomacher to be seen, and the fall of the shoulders to be guessed at. If Sir Archibald's opinion, therefore, was erroneous, it was not for want of opportunity of judging.

The face of the stranger possessed the character of loveliness which is termed majestic; although this appeared to exist more in the expression than the features, which were rather petite than otherwise. Her eyes were of the darkest blue, bright, and yet of that meditative cast which is rarely conjoined with remarkable brilliance; while her complexion being at the same time delicately fair, and her hair of the beautiful blond, celebrated by almost all the poets and fabliers of the three preceding centuries, she presented altogether those contrasts and contradictions in female beauty, which are, perhaps, still more exciting to the imagination, and dangerous to the heart, than regular perfection.

Her dress, although sufficiently common when seen at a little distance, appeared on nearer view to be of a quality so rich, that Douglas conceived her to be at the very least a princess. The veil which descended from the lofty cone of her hat, and, although supported on her left arm, reached the stirrups, was of a texture far more delicate than that of the dauphin's bride; her stomacher was of cloth of gold, studded with gems; and surmounting it, in a kind of frill which encircled the neck, appeared a portion of her chemise, as fine as the two which Isabella of Bavaria possessed, and which were esteemed by her age as luxuries worthy of a queen. The purse at her girdle, called an *ausmonière*, perhaps, from its original destination, was peculiarly elegant in form, and the *paternoster* (a chaplet of beads) which hung beside it was of pure gold.

The Scot looked long at this gracious apparition; and yet, but for a circumstance about to be mentioned, he would have had to describe her to his friend David, only as one of those

phantoms, who pass us by in the crowd of the world, and are no more seen :—

One of those forms which flit by us when we
Are young, and fix our eyes on every face ;
And oh ! the loveliness at times we see
In momentary gliding, the soft grace,
The youth, the bloom, the beauty which agree
In many a nameless being we retrace,
Whose course and home we know not, nor shall know,
Like the lost Pleiad, seen no more below !

The young imagination of Margaret of Scotland was greatly touched by the appearance of the lady ; and when, in answer to her inquiries, she was announced as the damsel of Laval, the guardians of the princess hastened to advise her to receive, with some mark of peculiar courtesy, the daughter of one of the most distinguished men of the time. Sir Archibald Douglas, who chanced to be standing near, was accordingly despatched to invite her to approach ; and all on a sudden, he found himself thus thrown in contact with the object of his admiring gaze.

The damsel, with her knight, and an escort of four men-at-arms, had in the meantime fallen behind ; and Douglas, as he rode up to them, observed her companion extend his hand hastily towards the young lady's bridle, as if to prevent her advance. The Scot, however, delivered his message, and Pauline de Laval accepted the invitation promptly.

" It will displease your father," said the armed knight, hastily, in a low voice, " there are powerful reasons ; and being here in his stead, I entreat—nay, I—"

" Sir !" exclaimed the damsel in a tone of surprise, as she turned her eyes upon his iron-veiled face.

" Tarry, and I will explain," said he, in one of those deep, full, melodious voices, which captivate the ear, and win the confidence ; " or at least return promptly, and I will show my meaning, as we follow the procession." On this understanding they parted ; and the damsel, with a radiant smile to Douglas, put her palfrey to a pace which compelled him to use his long spurs in order to keep his ground by her side.

The interview with the bride lasted but for a moment. As the young lady drew near, Margaret, either prompted by her naturally affectionate disposition, or counselled by her guardians, opened her arms, and would have embraced her ; but

Mademoiselle de Laval, leaping lightly from her horse, bent her knee half way to the ground, and kissed the little princess's hand. She then regained the saddle as suddenly as she had descended, but not before the ready Scot had had time to render her such assistance as at least convinced him that she was a being of earth's mould; and, with a glance and bow, which he appropriated entirely to himself, she bounded back to her attendants.

A turning of the road soon after concealed her party from his view; but Douglas had observed, just before they disappeared, that the same kind of debate which he had witnessed, appeared to be still going on. The night was evidently attempting, as his gestures showed, to dissuade the damsel from advancing in the path of the royal cortege; while her manner betrayed much more reluctance to comply than could be accounted for, even by girlish curiosity to see the princess's reception at Tours. Added to this, he had perceived the knight, during the brief absence of his charge, in closer and more confidential conference with the men-at-arms, than their respective stations, and the light nature of their present duty, seemed to warrant; and these circumstances, which at the present day, if marked at all, would leave no trace upon the mind, filled the observer in the wild and disjointed times of which we write, with anxiety and suspicion.

This, we allow, may be traced in part to the interest which the singularly beautiful person with whom his thoughts were busy had inspired, and to the natural disappointment he felt at losing sight of her so suddenly; but Douglas, besides, brought up as he had been, in comparative seclusion, was deeply imbued with the feelings of that romantic chivalry which was already little more than a tale of the olden time, and perhaps any woman, in similar circumstances, would have produced the same course of thought and action. After lingering for an instant, he disengaged himself quietly from the procession, and followed by four men-at-arms, whom he had whispered, rode back briskly, though without any appearance of violent haste, to the turn of the road.

The line of road beyond was visible for several miles without interruption, and yet was utterly deserted. Douglas and his followers instantly dashed into a side path, near which the objects of their pursuit had been last seen; and on reaching an eminence, observed the four men-at-arms, without their chief, scouring hastily away in another direction, through the thicket.

More than ever astonished at this spectacle, the Scot continued to follow in the path at a headlong gallop; till at length a succession of shrieks in the distance confirmed all his suspicions.

The knight and the damsel were soon in view; the former grasping the bridle of the palfrey, and urging the animal on to the pace of his own magnificent horse; while Pauline de Laval, struggling with her ravisher, rent the air with her screams as they flew. Maddened by this sight, the young Scot put his charger to his utmost speed, and gained rapidly upon the ruffian knight. By dint of whip and spur he was soon near enough to make his voice heard; which he did in the usual terms of reproach and defiance, making known at the same time in the gallant spirit of the age, the challenger's name, by the shout of "Douglas to the rescue!"

The knight at first disregarded this salutation, but on the sound coming nearer, he halted suddenly, leaped to the ground, tied the forelegs of the palfrey, and, regaining his seat in an instant, put his lance in rest, and awaited the pursuer. At this time one of the Scottish men-at-arms was in sight; and before Sir Archibald had approached within the length of a cross-bow shot, or in other words, near enough to allow the unknown to commence advantageously his career, a second appeared in view. Nothing daunted, however, by the odds, even of three to one, the ravisher coolly poised his lance, and awaited the proper moment to spring. But before this came, the third and fourth men-at-arms were in sight; and the knight, after an instant's hesitation, shook his arm threateningly towards the damsel of Laval, and spurred into the thicket.

"You are in safety, Madam," cried Douglas, whose border blood was now running in a whirlpool; "the royal cortege is at hand; and under the escort of my trusty followers, no harm can befall you. Permit me to ride after yonder recreant, and teach him—"

"Hold!" cried Mademoiselle de Laval, for the knight was already commencing his ride as he spoke; "come hither—hither;" and with a gesture of her finger, which was irresistibly commanding, from the mere absence of all doubt as to its power of command, she drew him to her side.

"I must desire of you, Sir Knight," continued she, quietly, "to add to the service you have already rendered, by escorting me yourself in person into Tours. It is a duty which,

doubtless, you feel to be at once more agreeable and more honourable than that of pursuing a flying enemy."

"As to the pleasure and the honour," replied Sir Archibald, "they are only greater and richer than I deserve; but, ruffian as he is, the fugitive appears, in all respect of arms, to be worthy of my sword; and neither can he be said to have been fairly vanquished, seeing that he only fled from a force of five men—"

"And a woman."

"Permit me, at least," said Douglas, compelled to smile in the midst of his chagrin, "to inquire the name and lineage of this recreant; that on some future occasion I may finish the feud which I hereby take upon me, most noble lady, in your behalf, and in the name of St. Michael the archangel."

"At the court of king Artus," replied the damsel, "he is recognised as the Unknown—no, as the Black Knight. May I venture to ask in turn the style of his challenger? Have I the honour of having obtained for a servant Sir Tristan, Sir Meliadus, or Sir Lancelot?—Sir Lanval, or Sir Gruelan the faithful and beloved?—or, in fine, Sir Gauvain, he who dared the terrors of the Enchanted Sword for the sake of a kiss?"

"I am none of these," said the young knight, blushing and smiling, as, notwithstanding his little acquaintance with the popular fabliaux of the time, he could not help feeling he was quizzed. "I am not even one of the worthies of the court of king James, or of king Charles. My name is Archibald; I am of a younger branch of the Scottish house of Douglas; my domain consists of a few acres of brown heath, called, in our homely tongue, the Braes, with a border tower rising from the banks of Tweed; and, for fault of fortune and occupation at home, I have brought my father's sword to the wars of France, and to the service of the most amiable and lovely of her daughters."

"Thanks, noble stranger," said the young lady, dropping suddenly her tone of raillery, and blushing in her turn, as she bestowed a momentary glance of surprise and interest upon the ingenuous countenance of the Scot,—“Here you have found but a distracted country, and a wilful maiden, for the exercise of your chivalry; but, if men say true, even the meanest feud will furnish a field of honour for the Bleeding Heart.” Douglas bowed even to his horse's neck, as with a flushing cheek and glistening eye, he replied to this compliment to his family.

"I feel," said he, "that the name of my clan will receive no stain at my hands: more especially," he added, after an abrupt pause, and in the spirit of an almost by-gone chivalry; "more especially, if Pauline de Laval will deign to inspire me! yet, I pray you to observe, and thereupon I take you strongly to witness, that I am of a younger branch—that I am poor and alone—and that thus no discredit can reasonably attach to the house, even if it should be the fate of Archibald Douglas to fight undistinguished, and fall unhonoured and unknown."

While thus conversing, they were rapidly gaining upon the procession; but when just about to mingle with the last of the crowd, Pauline hung back.

"Touching the knight," said she, "of whom you have inquired, it would be bootless for you to know his name, and worse than bootless to pursue the feud. Powerless himself, he is protected by a power with which it would be madness to contend. Let it suffice to know—if indeed you take more interest in the subject than concerns your own fame—that I am safe for the future, and that, so far from renewing his attempt, he will never more dare even to meet the eye of Pauline de Laval."

They had now gained the town, the streets of which displayed, on a small scale, the same sort of confusion and magnificence described in the opening chapter of this work. The bride was mounted on a white horse, whose bridle, studded with gems, was held on each side by a distinguished noble of the French court. After her came a brilliant train of ladies, likewise mounted, and dressed uniformly, with hats of extraordinary height, and long white veils depending from the crown. Then followed two chariots filled with ladies; and then a troop of gentlemen of the French and Scottish courts.

The procession stopped at the château, on the banks of the river, which was the royal residence; and Margaret, dismounting, was led in by the Count de Vendome and a Scottish earl, and met in the great hall by the queen of France, the queen of Sicily, the princess Radigonde, natural daughter of the king, the Countess de Vendome, and other distinguished persons. Immediately after, the boy-dauphin entered, and the future Louis XI. kissed his little wife, when the ceremonial of the scene was at an end.

During the whole of this time the pertinacious Scot had remained by Mademoiselle de Laval; and as soon as the recep-

tion was over, they proceeded together to her father's house. This mansion, though but rarely occupied by the lord de Retz, was little inferior in magnificence to the royal chateau; and Sir Archibald's heart sunk within him at the view—he knew not why.

"Alas!" thought he, gazing, as if unwillingly, at the palace-walls before him, with their rich and vast gardens swelling on the one side, and the broad and beautiful Loire rolling its silver tide on the other. "Alas, my poor little border-tower, and its heather hills, and the brawling Tweed below!"

When they had dismounted, and were just about entering the house, a clatter of horses' hoofs was heard behind them, and an old man, wholly unattended, spurred into the court. Douglas's heart beat, for he thought by the sudden emotion displayed by Pauline, that this must be the lord de Retz; but a single glance, when the horseman had dismounted, served to banish the idea. He was a man apparently not under seventy years of age; although the keen expression and extreme brightness of his eyes, indicated an unabated freshness and vigour, both of mind and body. Surmounting the ordinary habiliments, he wore a garment resembling the oriental kaftan. The colour was black, but the material of the richest silk, and minutely figured with such antique and unintelligible devices, as showed that the fabric belonged to another country, and perhaps to another age. The most remarkable appendage of the wearer, however, was a beard of extraordinary length, and so intensely white as to give an unworldly air to the whole figure. The damsel of Laval bent before him with what seemed to be habitual reverence, mingled with astonishment.

"I am happy," she faltered, "yet surprised—"

"To see thine ancient friend," said the old man, with a benign smile, "a hundred miles from where you supposed him to be? This morning, however, I discovered a neglect which might have led thee into danger."

"This morning!"

"Ay, or yesterday, or a week ago—what matters it? and I am here, in time, I find, to congratulate thee on thy escape, and to present my fervent thanks to thy deliverer."

"Had the damsel of Laval permitted me," said Douglas, "I should indeed have deserved your thanks, by avenging her quarrel on the ruffian."

"She was wiser than thou. In the hands of that ruffian thou wouldst have been but as a wand."

"Even so, messire, to chastise him withal," said the Scot, reddening: "but, methinks the neglect you acknowledge, since you could not have known of my timely presence, would have been best remedied by sending before you some trusty followers of the lord de Retz, to the relief of his daughter." The young lady looked distressed, and even alarmed at this taunt, but the old man did not appear even to have heard it.

"The neglect," said he, in a tone almost of soliloquy, "was natural. How could I have thought of suspecting danger? He was the lineal descendent of my sister—he is the only being who can count kindred with me upon earth. Howbeit, were he my own son, he shall pay the forfeit of his crime. He loves thee, lady. It was his purpose to carry thee off by force to a far island in the midst of the sea—farther still than Madeira, and beyond even the uttermost cape of Bojador; and there, untrammelled by the distinctions of wealth and rank, to have made thee his for ever. Fool! he thought to fly from *me*! as if my eye could not see him, and my hand reach him, were he in the depths of ocean itself! But his life is forfeited. Speak the word, Pauline de Laval, and he dies in thy presence."

"I demand not his death," said Pauline, "nay, I beg his life of you, as a boon. Let him go, if he lists, to the regions of that far island. Such as he will be received with welcome by prince Henry of England; and in the service of that explorer of unknown seas, his rank and adventurous spirit may yet win for him honour and renown."

"So be it," said the old man, "my unworthy kinsman shall set forth for Sagres, by the light of this day's sun, to seek the English prince."

Such was Douglas's first adventure in France, or rather, we ought to say, its commencement. Had Pauline de Laval appeared to him all on a sudden as the daughter of one of the greatest lords in Europe, it is probable that the wandering knight would have regarded her as "some bright particular star," fit only to be worshipped at the distance of that impassable space interposed between them. But the same even of the lord de Retz had as yet hardly penetrated to the Ultima Thule of the Scottish border; and Pauline was beloved as a woman before Douglas knew that in rank and fortune she was only beneath a queen.

There had been something so dazzling about the career of

the lord de Retz, that most men imagined his constant good fortune to be more than natural. Left an orphan heir at twenty years of age, brave, generous, accomplished, and the handsomest of the handsome, there would have been nothing extraordinary in a moderate portion of prosperity. But the favours of that destiny which is called accident, descended upon him in a continuous shower; and, as in the case of King Midas, every thing he touched seemed to be turned into gold. In addition to his own large fortune, the beautiful Catherine de Thouars brought him a queenly dowry when he was only twenty-four; and by the death of relations, one after another, he inherited estate after estate, till his possessions extended over several provinces in France and Brittany.

As a soldier, he was equally brave, skilful, and fortunate. Besides his other almost daily exploits, Charles VII. was indebted to him for the château of Lude, which he captured with great valour, slaying the commandant; and he chased the English, unassisted by the king, from the fortress of Rennefort, and that of Malicorne on the Maine. In 1429 he was the principal ally of the Maid of Orleans, in throwing supplies into the city; and he was one of the great chiefs who, in the midst of this mighty revolution, solemnly anointed Charles at Reims. Count and Marshal of France, and privy-counsellor and chamberlain of the king, and afterwards lieutenant-general of Brittany, his native country, under John V., the possessor of more estates, as the historians of the time relate, than his memory served him to reckon by their names—Gilles de Retz, at the commencement of our story, was still in the very flower of life, being little more than forty years of age.

It was only by degrees the Scottish stranger learnt the true rank of his mistress; and not until certain passages had taken place between them—imperceptible indeed to the world, but O, how important in the journals of the heart!—which would have made it equally base and impossible to retract. As for Pauline, ever since the above adventure, her young heart was in such a flutter of fear and delight, that she had no time to inquire into the nature of the spell which bound her. Hitherto her admirers had been the rude and ignorant barons of her own country, or those hired mercenaries whose trade was not noble war, but blood and plunder. Douglas, in the midst of such men, appeared like some phantom knight whom her fancy had conjured up from its stores of tradition and ro-

mance. At first she could hardly comprehend him; and her heart, already drilled into the cold forms of the world, almost distrusted an enthusiasm so new to her outward senses, yet so familiar in her dreams. Even when she fully understood his character, he remained separated in her imagination from the breathing mass of mankind; and in those moments when the mind is accustomed to flee away from the realities of life into the regions of poetry and fiction, it was he who was the genius of the song, the hero of the tale—an impersonation of the brave, the generous, and the beautiful. Let us add, although the observation is trite, that the very difference in their fortunes must have presented something piquant to the fancy of Pauline; and that the vista along which her spirit looked, must have been not the less tempting for those obstacles in the way, which the heart of eighteen *knows* to be impossibilities, yet *hopes* to surmount.

Douglas was not long of discovering, that the old man was a very important person in the family of the lord de Retz.

"Make Orosmandel your friend," was the constant injunction of the damsel; but to her lover's simple question, *"Why?"* she could give no satisfactory answer.

"Is he noble? is he wealthy? is he high in office? has he an army of vassals at his beck? has he the ear of the kings of the time?"

"No, no, no. He has no rank, no command—he is moneyless, landless, and alone. He is an Arab, and his name is Orosmandel, and that is all even my father knows. He is kind, gentle, and humane; but his resolves are as irrevocable as destiny. I do not comprehend him. He appears to do nothing, yet every thing is done according to his desire. He rarely stirs from our château, on the banks of the Erdre, yet there are traces of him every where. My father, who would not brook a haughty glance from a throned king, is his obedient, revering, helpless child; and I, a spoiled and wilful maid, although I love more than fear him, feel as if I only existed by his permission."

"Then," said Douglas, *"he is either a sorcerer or a man of genius, and I shall try to make Orosmandel my friend."*

The knight passed a considerable portion of a year at Tours, and then accompanied the king to the siege of Montereau, while the damsel returned to her accustomed home in the city of Nantes. As this was previous to the commencement of our story, the reader will not demand a detailed account of

the parting of the lovers. That Douglas, however, was still sustained by some kind of wild and indefinite hopes, may be inferred from the fact, that his chief purpose, in seeking out his friend at Paris, was to invite the student to accompany him on a journey into Brittany, which he meditated. The sudden apparition of his mistress at the theatre, attended by the good or evil genius of the family, bewildered him so much, that at first he could form no plan of action; but at length, with the customary frankness of his nature, determining that the boldest was the best policy, he watched the moment of their leaving the boxes, and joined them in the street. The result of this interview must be given hereafter, for we have only too long delayed inquiring into the consequence of Philip Armstrong's playing the devil.

CHAPTER VII.

ON the morning after David Armstrong's exhibition at the theatre, the first faint glimmering of the dawn disclosed him and his three comrades lying, as usual, in one room, buried in sleep. Their beds were four heaps of straw, covered with a ragged woollen cloth, and for a pillow each had under his head a bundle of straw bound with thongs, which the students of the university were in the habit of carrying with them to the class to sit upon. The apartment was large, but dreary and desolate; the floor was covered with litter; and every here and there the large stones of the wall were seen bare, and rough, denuded of the plaster which had adorned them in the days of yore.

Three of the four sleepers seemed to have but one character among them. They had fair hair, clear skins, and a ruddy complexion. Their foreheads were broad and massive; their noses firmly set; and their mouths, though pencilled in the rounded lines of youth, exhibited a certain rigidity, expressive of firmness and determination. Two of them were tall rather than otherwise, and strongly built; but Nigel was almost a giant. They all three slept as if soul and body had been alike unconscious. David, who was the handsomest of the four, was also the palest, owing, no doubt, to his mid-

night vigils; his brow was loftier than the others, and the whole head more intellectual. His sleep was troubled; his breath came thick and unequal; and his lips moved uneasily. At length, starting as a stronger beam of light touched his eyelids, he awoke and sat up in his bed.

"And am I here after all?" said he, "and was it nothing more than a trick of the enchanter Morpheus, the '*figuræ formator*,' as Ovid truly describeth him? Here!—and for the last time! No more shall the tiptoe visits of Aurora find me on this straw, a too reluctant Cephalus! No more shall I tread these venerable walks of Cadmus—'*In sylvis Academique quærere verum!*' And ye, my comrades, or, rather, my children—my babes, as I may call them, for whom my heart yearns, even like the heart of a mother—what will become of you? Well may you groan, Bauldy, a sure sign that you are nigh the waking; well may you hitch up your leg, Andrew, like a demoniac in the spasms; well may you shrink, my huge Nigel, like Tityus from his vultures, when he lay in hell, covering with his body nine acres of the burnt ground! What had I to do with Hashmodai? What was it to me if he had repeated the forty thousand verses of the Destruction of Troyes, and had been wrong in every verse? But yet it was indeed a torment to hear the dunce; and to do the citizens justice, they proved that they could appreciate talent, as well as condemn stupidity. Oh, it was a grand moment!—Hem!

"Devils of hell, horned and horrible!—"

"The Lord save us!" cried Bauldy, and Nigel, and Andrew, with one voice, as they started from their sleep at this invocation, and sat up in their beds.

"Is it clubs, David?" cried Nigel, swinging round his arm, so as to grasp conveniently a huge weapon of the kind, which lay within reach.

"Who named the name of the Evil One?" demanded Bauldy in dismay.

"And at this blessed time of the morning," added Andrew.

"It was I,—Hashmodai the damned!" and David sprung from his couch, threw himself into a true demoniac attitude, and went on with the quotation:

"Devils of hell, horned and horrible !
Great and small, with eyes of basilisks !
Infamous dogs, what has become of you ?"

"Excellent ! excellent !" cried the awakened audience :
"Bis ! Bis ! Hashmodai ! Hashmodai !"

"It is enough, my sons," said the master student ; "Hashmodai has played his part, and so let him rest. Now up with ye, sirs, one and all, and shake yourselves well ; and dash your heads into the water-pail ; and put your fingers through your hair ; and draw your cloaks evenly upon your shoulders ; and so look seemly and respectable. And now, countrymen and lovers, lend me your ears !"

As David went on gravely and methodically with an account of the circumstances of the preceding evening, the three young men testified the amusement they received by shouts of mirth ; and more especially, when he repeated the bitter jokes he had taken the liberty of introducing on the subject of the university, they laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks. But when all was concluded, they became suddenly silent, and looked inquiringly into one another's faces, while a kind of dismay seemed to creep over their minds, as the reflection forced itself upon them, of what must be the consequence of their friend's exploit.

"And now, my friends," continued David, "you are aware that in our days the scholastic discipline has suffered at least a partial relaxation. We no longer, for instance, stand at our tasks naked from the waist upwards, that we may receive more feelingly the regent's stripes. But what of that ? These were honourable inflictions, and left no shame behind. The penal laws, however, of the university, are the same to-day as formerly ; and, as the statutes describe, for acting immodest pieces, or impugning on the stage the character of the Light of the Faith, the offending scholar must suffer publicly, '*supra dorsum nudum, pulsante campana.*' Think of that—on his bare back, to the tolling of their infernal bell !"

The audience groaned.

"And now, sirs," he went on, "as for such a degradation befalling *me*, who am an Armstrong, as you well know, and a near cousin of the name of Douglas by the mother's side, it is of course out of the question : but being so, it behoves *me* to take the wings of this blessed morning, and flee away."

"Whither ?" cried the three in one breath.

"Whither the Lord willeth," answered David, looking upwards, "for I am even as a straw let loose upon the wind, to go wheresoever the wind shall carry it."

"Let there be four straws of us then," cried Bauldy, "and let us all go where the Lord willeth."

"By no means," said Nigel. "Let us thrash the witnesses till we turn their tongues inside out."

"Nay, nay," suggested Andrew, "we know not what even an hour may bring forth. Let us wait till the last moment, and then either fight or flee, as occasion may require."

"Hold your tongues, sirs, I desire you!" said David, "How dare you speak of such a thing to me? Is it likely, think you, that I should consent to take you from under the maternal wings of the University, when, as God shall judge me, I know not where this night to lay my own head? The days of knight-errantry are past and gone, or we might even sally forth, and take our share with the rest, of anything that was going, blows or pudding; but for decent men's sons, and students of polite learning to boot, to turn themselves into ruffians, who fight for a hire, it is a thing I would neither permit nor countenance. And, in what other way would ye propose to get your living? Do you know the mysteries by heart, like me, so that you might enter into some strolling brotherhood of the Passion? Or are ye qualified to enlist under the banner of the King of the Minstrels? Or would ye sing litanies in the streets of Paris, for your miserable bread, and lie at night, higgledy piggledy, under the bridges, with the thieves and ill women of the profane side of the river—the Transtiberian bank, as I may stigmatize it, seeing that it is there such offensive trades are carried on? No, no, Bauldy—no, Nigel—no, Andrew, ye must still continue, lads, to live decently, and cultivate humane learning; and, if it should be the fate of David Armstrong to sink in the whirl of that world on which his fate or follies have cast him, he will sink *alone*, and so his moan will be the sooner made."

A deep silence followed this oration; during which, David arranged his cloak upon his shoulders, looked at the window, which was now brightening in the early sun, and turned ever and anon a furtive glance at his companions. As the moment of his exodus drew near, the four friendless lads felt the ties that had bound them together in a foreign land, drawn tighter and tighter over their hearts. At last a sudden sob was heard, though manfully smothered in a clearing of the throat; and

the youthful giant Nigel strode forward with an unsteady step, and looking down upon the castway, addressed him in these words :

"It is of no use, daddy David ; you have more sense than us all three put together, and if you withdraw your counsel, we shall only get brained some night by the other students, or hanged some morning by the University. Besides, if any of us have a chance of getting on in this kind of priestcraft, it is you ; and to lose the labour of years for a joke, is not to be thought of. Touching the matter of the public flogging, it is no doubt a sore thing both for soul and body, but what of that ? My father, honest man, though a kinsman of yours, was little better than a reiver himself ; and it may be, that I am some whit thicker in the mind, as well as skin, than you. My shoulders, too, are broad enough to bear the burden of a still greater transgression ; and in short, sit you down at your ease, cousin, and do not throttle yourself in that fashion with your cloak. The whole three of us will make oath that you are as innocent of Hashmodai as the babe unborn ; and, for your sake, David, I will take all upon myself, devil, whip, and bell !"

"Shame upon you !" said David, in strong agitation, "and you a kinsman of the Armstrongs, and a kindly Scot ! Away, I have done with you ! begone ! And to think that I would let them tear your young flesh and crush your proud spirit to save my own, when you knew well I would lay down my life for yours ! Fye, lad, fye ! Come here, you overgrown whelp. Nigel ! May the Lord bless and preserve you forever !" and David, unable to struggle longer with his feelings, hid his face on his friend's bosom, and lifted up his voice, and wept. In the midst of the sobs of the whole party, there were heard, at some distance, the ominous sounds of a bell.

"It is enough," said David, disengaging himself from the Herculean clasp of his cousin. "You have betrayed me into a girl's weakness, Nigel ; but since I see we are all pot and kettle in the business, it is the less matter. It was my purpose, lads, to have said a parting word for your benefit ; but, as time presses, I can do little more than bid you remember, in all your outgoings and incomings in the world, that you are Scottish and Christian men. For yourselves, individually, take no thought ; but bear constantly in mind, that you belong to your race and nation, and that your conduct may reflect either honour or discredit upon your fathers before you, and

your children after you. Abstain from the cup, except in so far as decency and good manners permit. If you are offered a drink in moderation, take it without grudging, as one who is willing to make a due return when circumstances permit. But it is always a thriftless expenditure to buy wine for a man's own mouth ; which is a subject, however, on the which I need not enlarge, seeing that you are not likely often to have the price of a bottle in your purse. Of that other and more fatal cup, drugged with the Circæan enchantments of beauty, I say, unto you beware ! If you have left behind you a fair and innocent mistress, or, if you bear enshrined in your fancy some lovely Vision, of which you hope to fall in with the reality on earth, invoke that saving angel in the hour of temptation ! Avoid evil company ; or, if that is impossible, look upon it even as mariners look upon a beacon on the shore—a sign to warn and deter, not to invite. Fail not, night and morning, to address yourselves to God, and the Blessed Virgin, at your lying down, and rising up ; and finally, my dear friends, at some odd moments now and then, in those pauses of life when the wearied heart retires into the past, think—kindly if you can—of David Armstrong !” The bell was now heard nearer and nearer ; and the young men wrung one another's hands, while silent tears were raining down their cheeks. David stepped upon the ledge of the window ; but it was not till the tread of the authorities was heard ascending the stairs, that he sprang into the back court below, and disappeared among the buildings of the college.

He had truly said, that he knew not where that night to lay his head ; and yet it must not be supposed that David, even in so sudden and unforeseen an emergency, was without his plans and purposes. The stranger, whom messire Jean had called Prelati, was perhaps not precisely the sort of person whom, under ordinary circumstances, he would have chosen for a patron ; but still, even before his self-expulsion from the university, he had balanced within himself as to whether he might not try his service for a while. This man was without a single mean or cruel trait in his countenance ; and the only gleam of fierceness he had exhibited was when virtually accused by the adept of contemplating an ungenerous action. Was it not possible that the latter, when he regarded him as an incarnate demon, was under the influence of the worse demon of avarice ? And might not the great bulk of Prelati's transgressions amount to the fact—which David

did not consider a very heavy matter—of his being as ready as his neighbours to redeem the spoil of the Egyptians on every feasible occasion, from the fangs of the Jew.

If such had been his reflections before his fateful visit to the theatre, it may be supposed that this favourable hypothesis was strengthened, if not altogether confirmed, by the appearance of the Arabian philosopher. Orosmandel was doubtless the “friend” alluded to as the master of the lord de Retz, in some science still more sublime than alchemy; and well might Prelati smile at the Jew’s mistake, in connecting such a man with the idea of the prince of darkness! A mild dignity was the chief characteristic of his face—a dignity arising, not from external, but intellectual grandeur; and David recognised, through all their disparity of years and figure, a sort of family resemblance between him and the subterranean visitor, which, without derogating from the former, exalted the latter to a tenfold pitch in his imagination.

But, even supposing his favourable opinion to be founded in error, David, whose nerves were good, considered that, with the sense both of mind and body open, he should run but little risk. Something good *might* befall him. The lord de Retz, however short of ready money at the present moment, had the character of being both wealthy and generous. On the spot he would have an opportunity of serving his friend; Sir Archibald, either by furthering his love plans—for he had read the history in a glance—or by detaching him at once from a hopeless pursuit. And as for danger, if such should prove to exist, he was perfectly ready to trust to a quick eye, a ready hand, and, if need were, a clean pair of heels—always, over and above, the protection of the most holy Virgin, and the blessed St. Bride. “The Marmaridæ,” concluded he, with a quaint erudition, which in his time was not the small pedantry of a village schoolmaster, “the Marmaridæ, as we find in the verses of Caius Silius Italicus, lived among serpents, and were poison-proof!”

Such were his reflections on his way home from the theatre; where, in all probability, his exploit was proximately caused by that sort of reckless desperation, which sometimes prompts a hesitating climber to end the debate, by kicking the support from under him. Till then he had an idea almost equally strong, of continuing, as usual, his research after the philosopher’s stone; in the hope that the demerits of the Jew would be overlooked out of regard to the merits of the Chris-

tian. But now the thing was settled. The university was as sharp as the law in looking after its victims; and unless he was content to dwell for life with his unbelieving master, "burrowing," as he said "in dens and caves, like the Trog-lodytæ," he must quit Paris instant. As for Douglas's proposal, that he should turn a military adventurer, he knew very well that dry blows were, as often as otherwise, the lot of such desperadoes, whom every body was anxious to get rid of the moment their services could be dispensed with. This profession would by no means do for one who sought fortune as a means of comfort and independence; and the student had determined, rather than embrace it, to enlist among those explorers of unknown seas and far-way lands, whose fame was now beginning to ring throughout Europe; and so give himself a chance of falling in with some new Pactolus, whose tide rolled over golden sands.

The Hebrew maid, whose sudden appearance in her own character, was the real cause of the commotion which had taken place in his mind, and the change, as it appeared, in his destinies, was a subject on which he had not permitted himself to dwell. It was enough that a barrier existed between them which hope itself could not overleap; and even when contemplating the possibility of his still remaining her father's assistant, he looked upon *her* as on some disembodied shape that might haunt him like a spirit, but whom he must never more think of as a woman. Still, when seeking his way, as he did now, by by-paths, to her dwelling, with almost the certainty of seeing her—if, indeed, he saw her at all—for the last time, he experienced a sensation more painful than it had ever before been his lot to endure. A portion of this might, no doubt, be accounted for by the parting scene he had just undergone, and by the loneliness and desolation of heart he must have felt in his present outcast situation; but, however this may be, when he reached the ruined buildings, and was about to enter the door, and to breathe the atmosphere where *she* lived, and moved, and had her being, he felt as if he would have fallen to the ground.

At this hour he knew it would be necessary to make his descent by the dwelling-house, and lifting the latch softly, he entered the humble and ruinous abode. All was so still, and had so dreary an aspect, that he began to hope *painfully*, that the mysterious family had vanished; but the next moment

the daughter of messire Jean stood before him in her usual ghost-like fashion.

"Thou hast tarried," said she, while a slight colour rose into her cheek, "my father hath watched all night for thy coming."

"Damsel—" replied David.

"My name is Hagar."

"Hagar! It is the name of the bondwoman who wandered of old, fainting, in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. It is the name of an Egyptian;" and the scholar seemed to derive some satisfaction from the idea.

"It is a type of our nation! Even so wandereth Israel to this day, cast forth, and forsaken of God and man—wearied, heavy in heart, and way-sore!"

"It is you who forsook and were not forsaken. Turn again, O daughter of Jacob, and God and man will receive thee!"

"It may not be. We await, like Hagar, the coming of One who will show unto us a well in the wilderness, saying, 'Fear not; for I will make of thee a mighty nation!' Pass on, stranger to our race, and take no thought of the daughter of the desert!" She turned away as she spoke, and led the way into the interior; but when just about to descend the ladder which conducted to the subterranean chambers, she again spoke, approaching a step nearer to the listener.

"David," said she. David started, and an indescribable thrill shot through his frame.

"My father, thou knowest, is sorely beset, and his judgment is clouded by reason of the dangers that encompass him. Accept not of the advancement he will offer thee. Tarry with him, if thou wilt, till he is able to flee away from this city of death; but follow not his footsteps, neither go thou before—not for a king's ransom!"

"And you?" said David, in a tone of breathless interest.

"As for me," she replied, smiling sadly, "I am accustomed to wander alone in the wilderness. Take no thought of Hagar:—but heed well her words, which concern thy life—peradventure thy soul!" and stepping upon the ladder, she disappeared in the abyss. David followed, like a man in a dream.

Messire Jean was sitting, as usual, at his table, but from habit, as it seemed, more than business: for that furnace was

now cold, which was wont to be watched as religiously as the sacred fire of the Parsees. When David went in, announced by his daughter, the old man did not at first raise his head; and when he spoke, there was a hesitation, amounting even to timidity, in the tone of his voice.

"Thou hast tarried, my son," said he, "but thy fortune waiteth. Behold, our fire is out; and that shall let thee know that a voice of no little potency hath called me, and that I must perforce turn back, even with my foot upon the last step, and go forth again into the world. Without me, thou canst not continue the search, for thou hast neither means nor instruction; but I have cared for thee, even in the midst of my travail, and I have found thee a new friend, and according to the calculation of men, fairer prospects. What sayest thou? Art thou content? Wilt thou forth, even this night, in the path I shall show?"

"Show it me, and I shall answer; if I am to go forth, tell me whither; and if I am to serve—for I guess it is not to command—say who is to be my master, and what my wages."

"How! Art thou in a condition to make terms? Where be thy lands and thy moneys? Is thy cloak whole, that thou shouldst stand up, and say unto me, Do this, and this?"

"I have no land, nor money," replied the student, "my garments are no longer new; and I am this morning an out-cast from the University. Speak, for the time passes; and ere the coming of the night, I have to provide myself with a shelter from my pursuers, and with a place whereon to lay my head."

"These things will I provide," said the Jew eagerly, while his constraint was replaced by an air of visible satisfaction; "Is it not our duty to be a father to the fatherless, and to take the wanderer in? If harm comes of it, is it the fault of the benefactor? These things are in the hands of the Almighty; but thou, valiant David, who wast born when the Sun was in the sign of the Lion, thy planet is stationary, and thou needest fear no evil."

"In other words, I may escape destruction, provided my hand can protect my head."

"Destruction! Is it destruction to serve in the laboratory of a philosopher, who is protected by the greatest lord in Europe? Go to, thou art still a boy. And yet I bid thee not slumber, as if thou wert in my mother's cradle—that were a counsel unworthy of my age, since it is written that 'years

should speak, and multitude of days teach wisdom.' Are not the watchful and the bold more likely to succeed than the heedless and timid? I will give thee a sword, good David Strongarm, and a dagger which thou wilt wear in thy girdle, and a suit of new raiment; and in the family of the lord de Retz thou wilt flourish exceedingly—and yet never cease to be wary. But what wilt thou do in turn for me, thou who hast eaten of my bread, and drank of my cup? Lo, I demand of thee but a very little thing. Stand back, daughter—silence, for I will not hear thee! Get thee gone, and prepare the morning meal. I am even as a stranger here, good David; for while tarrying in this place, year after year, absorbed in the great work, the world hath passed by, and forgotten me. I have no one to whom I can say, Do this, and he doth it; and to you alone, of all the myriads of mankind around me, can I open my lips. 'The task, I know, is unfit for thy years; but thou art wise and sober-minded, as well as faithful and brave; and wert thou none of these, thou art my only stay, and I must trust thee. I have a daughter—'

David started.

"Tarry, for I will be brief. I mean the young woman who was wont to bring in thy supper, she who was here even now—didst thou mark her?"

The student flushed to the roots of the hair; but he replied only by a calm inclination of the head.

"It is needful that she set out this day, towards the dusk of the evening, for the city called Nantes, where our kinsfolk dwell; tarrying as little as possible by the way, more especially till she hath passed the frontiers of France. Now, the service I have to beg of thee, is this: to permit the girl to travel so far in thy company, and, if need be, under thy protection. What! thou refusest? Verily, it is on the road to the château of the lord de Retz; it will not put thee out thy way an inch; and Hagar—I would say the young woman—is modest in her speech. She will be no more trouble to thee than a spaniel dog who followeth his master without being called or driven. Verily, it is but a little thing!" David, to whom an idea like this had never occurred as within the range of mundane possibilities, was in a profuse perspiration.

"It is not a little thing, it is a weighty matter," stammered he at last, "young women, I have heard, are uncanny gear; but, nevertheless, I will do your bidding; and the Virgin grant I get well over it!"

On hearing this acquiescence, a weight seemed to be taken off the old man's mind ; and, untying a bundle, he produced an entire suit of clothes, including a hat, and a serviceable, if not a handsome cloak ; for which David exchanged upon the spot such remnants as still remained upon his back of his scholar's apparel. The alchemist then presented him with a sword and dagger, the latter of which he fastened with his own hands, in such a way that it was entirely concealed ; and the student remarked, as an unusual circumstance, that his clothes and belt were expressly adapted for this purpose.

He was now better dressed than ever he had been in his life ; his hand grasped a sword which was his own ; and steady as the mind of the ex-scholar usually was, a flush of youthful confidence rose to his brow, and he walked several paces down the cavern, with a step so elastic that he seemed to tread on air.

"Have you nothing else to ask of me?" said he, returning, "for, by St. Bride, this were goodly payment, were the service to transport even the fury Megæra to Nantes, of whom, as Annæus Lucanus testifies, Hercules himself was afraid. What will become of *you* when we are gone? You will doubtless follow, for so I predicate from the extinction of the furnace, as soon as you are able. Do you want no assistance—no strong and trusty arm?"

"For what? Have I not given up the Search? And what else should make secrecy desirable?"

"I spoke not of secrecy," replied David, his lip curling with disdain at the Jew's dissimulation, "but be it even as you will."

"And yet, is there anything better than secrecy," resumed messire Jean, "in troubled times like these? When I said unto thee, Be watchful, and be bold, I should have said likewise, Be secret! Thou art the son of a people who, as men relate, are all three. Be there more of you, good David, at the University?"

"Go, seek at the Scottish college," answered David, who would not lose the opportunity of serving his friends, "and take the first you meet, for you cannot go wrong: but more especially, if you meet first with one who shall remind you of a poplar tree, or a cedar of Lebanon, or a church steeple, you may think that you have fallen in with as true and brave a fellow as ever cried 'clubs!' at a friend's need."

"Then let him come to me," said the alchemist eagerly,

"for I know not how my eyes may serve me in the unwonted light of day. Let him come to-morrow night to the upper dwelling. Shall it be so without fail?"

"Without fail."

"Then fare thee well, Good David Strongarm. When thou returnest in the twilight, thou shalt find my daughter awaiting thee at the door, and alone. Remember the words of my mouth: Be secret, bold, and watchful! Now go." But he still continued to grasp the young man's hand, while he looked in his face with an expression, in which David, instructed as he was, was able to read at once, affection, pity, and remorse. At length he undid the convulsive pressure; and, repeating in a tone of solemn warning the word, Remember! he pushed him towards the door, and turned away.

Hagar was waiting in the vestibule; and they both ascended the stairs without exchanging a word. When they reached the door, and were in the light of day—

"You see," said David, with an attempt at gaiety, which was almost ludicrous in the relation in which they stood at that moment with each other, "You see that I am now somewhat better fitted to be the esquire of dames!"

"I know not," replied she coldly; "I am a Jewess, and understand not the needs of chivalry."

"Then, adieu, till the evening."

"Stay, I meant not to hurt thee: but—no matter. A single word, lest I may not have opportunity again to speak it. Thou bearest a dagger at thy girdle: it is a talisman which will protect the life of the wearer just so long as it is worn concealed upon the person, and ready to the hand. Remember!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Soon after David Armstrong had made his escape from the Scottish college, the three forsaken students received a visit from Sir Archibald Douglas. The knight was not now so ignorant of the character of the university, as to be much surprised at the turn affairs had taken; neither, indeed, was he at all sorry that anything had occurred to detach his friend

from the pursuit, either of the thin, cold gown of a cure's vicar, or of that ignis fatuus of science, the philosopher's stone. The absence of the scholar, however, at this particular juncture, was annoying in the extreme; for Douglas had determined to set out the next morning for Brittany, and to take his early friend with him, as an ally in the adventure, if his powers of persuasion could bring it about.

After some fruitless inquiries as to the probable quarter to which their comrade had retired, he at length left Bauldy, and Nigel, and Andrew to their studies; and then returned to his own apartments, in the hope that by this time David might have found his way thither. The day, however, wore on in idle expectation; and the knight had determined, with a heavy heart, to set out on his journey alone; when he received a note from his friend, he knew not by whose hand, appointing a meeting, in the dusk of the evening, at a well-known inn and tavern, called the Pomme-du-Pin, for the purpose of exchanging farewells.

Sir Archibald's impatience did not allow him to wait till it was actually dark; but as soon as the broader light of day began to fade, he sallied forth from the palace, and sought out his rendezvous. The Pomme-du-Pin was a large building, which stood, as the modern French express it, "*entre cour et jardin*." Around the court were placed at regular distances sundry montors, or horseblocks, of different heights; so as to allow the guests, whether men, boys, or women, to mount their mules or horses without inconvenience. In the middle was a post, surmounted by a large lamp, whose yellow flame already began to mingle with the posthumous rays of the sun.

The walls of the house were brilliantly white; while the wooden posts or joists, which intersected them, were painted with the colours of the sign, green and vermilion. The sign itself was hung from the peak of the gable, which fronted the street. An air of comfort and substance overspread the whole picture; which was not diminished by the clean and jolly appearance of the host, who happened to be standing at the door, dressed in bonnet, doublet, and breeches, all as white as the walls of the hotel; with his snowy apron tucked up on one side, so as to disclose a long knife stuck in his girdle, with a handle of burnished copper. This costume showed that the Pomme-du-Pin was not a mere tavern, where the citizens assembled to drink; but also an inn, where travellers

were sure of finding a dinner suited to their means and inclination. The inn-keepers—as is still the case in the provinces—were always cooks.

When the knight entered the *salle*, or traveller's room, he thought within himself that king James was not better provided with a banqueting-hall. The walls were handsomely wainscotted to the very ceiling, and adorned with engravings, laid upon velvet, and well framed. One of these represented Noah's ark, with a selection of the animals it inclosed, looking out at the windows. Another contained the patriarchs, dressed like substantial burghers, with their paternosters hanging on their arms. Another showed forth the tower of Babel, with its ramparts defended by cannon; and another, the twelve months of the year, sowing, pruning, reaping, feasting, or killing a pig, according to the individual character.

Stools and benches were ranged along the walls; and sideboards groaning under piles of trenchers and porringers, some of wood, some of earthenware, but most of bright pewter. In the middle of the floor, stood a long, narrow table for the public dinner, or table d'hôte; and at the sides, some smaller ones for the convenience of excommunicated persons, or other guests who might choose to eat by themselves. The fireplace, since it was not cold enough for a fire, was ingeniously hidden by wainscoting, going upon hinges, and carved on both sides, so as to appear part of the wall, either when open or shut.

Douglas, who continued to lounge about the room for some time, indulging his curiosity, was set down by the drawers as an unproductive guest; and even, when at length he seated himself upon a stool which commanded a view of the door, and at the same time permitted him to lean his back against one of the sides of a kind of box, resembling the subdivisions of a modern coffee-room, he was left entirely to his own reflections. These were frequently disturbed by the entrance of various groups of guests; for it seemed now to be the time of evening, when both travellers and citizens were accustomed to refresh themselves after the labours of the day, and more especially for those of the mercantile profession, to sanctify their bargains by drinking healths to each other in full measures of wine.

He at length observed a person enter, substantially and genteelly dressed, in a traveller's cloak and boots, with a pointed

that adorned with a plume of feathers, signifying that the wearer either assumed, or was entitled to, the rank of a gentleman. A sword of formidable dimensions hung at his girdle, while an *escritoire*, or ink-horn, beside it, proclaimed that the stranger was something more than a mere military adventurer. Douglas started, and looked like a man who cannot believe his own senses; but the next moment his eyes were fixed, with overpowering curiosity, upon a female who leant upon the stranger's arm. She too, was in traveller's costume, and her face was completely concealed by her hood; a circumstance which somewhat relieved the knight, for a disgraceful suspicion had risen unconsciously in his mind. But, although furred and cinctured like the respectable women of the time, she had neither the *agnus* nor the jet chaplet, without which, they rarely went abroad; these things, like the others we have mentioned, being among the articles of ornament or apparel, forbidden by statute, to the votaries of the *Venus Vaga*.

The lady and gentleman were earnestly engaged in conversation, and seated themselves within the box, without having observed the curiosity they had excited.

"Why hast thou entered here?" said the former, looking round anxiously from under her hood, "would it not have been wiser to have tarried near the stables till our horses were ready? But, peradventure the clerks of the University are forbidden to frequent such places as this."

"Truly, you may say so," answered her companion; "and even if the statutes were silent, it is not likely that we should run much risk of meeting them where the wine, I will be bold to say, is as much as two sous. No, no, you must go to the cabarets for such gentry, or to the *Val d'Amour*—hem! I would say the *Val des Ecoliers*. But, *mademoiselle*, I will crave permission to leave you alone for a while. I expect a friend here, who is also, I may say, a far-off kinsman, and on no account must he see you. He is a decent youth, and his morals, I doubt, would be shocked at the mystery that is between us; and since you will not untie my tongue—"

"What is this place wherein thou leavest me? Methinks I am more likely to attract observation here, than if seated in the open room."

"Be satisfied that no one will enter, of his own will, beside you—not if he has room elsewhere in the broad lands of France. This is the table of the—"

"Of the what?"

"Of the excommunicated. But be of good cheer. Turn away your head when you see my friend join me; and the moment he is gone, we shall mount and away—where our voices will be lost in the burthen of the Seine, and our figures hidden in the bosom of the night." He rose up to leave the box, and, at that moment, encountered the eyes of the knight; who, leaning both hands on the partition, was staring down with unceremonious wonder, upon the mysterious pair.

"A good even to you, Archibald," said the scholar, after looking solemnly at his friend for nearly a minute. "You are before your time, rather than behind; but this calls for no especial commendation, since the trysting place is a tavern. I am here, however, to drink healths neither to saints nor angels—a custom to which I grieve to observe you are too much addicted: I pray you avoid it for the future. In a word, the University will not hear the truth, even from the father of lies; and as Hashmodai was banished to Upper Egypt by the angel Gabriel, even so I, his unworthy representative, have received a hint to travel—whither think you, Archibald?"

The knight glanced at Hagar, who sat without moving, her hood hanging far over her face, and then answered as distinctly as eyes could speak—"To the devil!"

"You are wrong, my friend," said David, "my destination is the château of La Verrière, on the banks of the Erdre; where I am to be the servant in science of the Arabian philosopher, Orosmandel.

"Holy Mary! is this a jest? or have you been musing again upon your Venus Dominie, and drinking her health till you fancied there was poison in the draught, and saw spectral castles on the wall?"

"Come, mademoiselle," said David, in huge dudgeon, "the night blackens apace, and our horses no doubt wait."

"Stay, I meant no harm: but if you can show me anything in the affinities of physical objects more curious than this coincidence, I shall renounce Christianity, and become an alchemist myself. Why, man, I spent this whole day in searching you out, that I might beg of you, for the sake of old friendship, to accompany me on that very journey. Even now, my horse is saddled, and my leave taken, and although it was not my purpose to have departed till the early morning, let us away, in God's name!"

"That may not be, for I have other company whose need is greater than yours. Howbeit, if we travel the same road,

it is not unlikely that we may meet at the end. In the mean time, fare you well, Archibald."

"And this, then, is all? Why, what a fool of imagination I have been! But go!—I only regret that a woman who travels alone with a young man in the middle of the night, and chooses a public wine-house for her starting place, has no likelihood of being able to make up to her victim or seducer, whichever he may be, for the loss of a friend. Farewell, my heretofore comrade—I wish you more fortunate in your trust than Archibald Douglas!" and the knight turned indignantly away.

"A word, messire," said David, following him, and speaking in a stern but low voice. "You know I am a man of peace: nevertheless, when we meet again, if, on my rendering such explanation as I may see fitting, you do not make instant amends for the wrong you have done the lady, who is now under my protection, I vow to the blessed St. Bride, I will make you feel the weight of the sword wherewith her father has entrusted me to defend his daughter!" On this address, Douglas, already chafing with disappointment, turned round like a lion touched by the hunter's spear; but, at the moment, the object of their contention, throwing back her hood, glided in between them.

"Sir Knight," said she, "the indelicacy thou hast so well and so sharply reprov'd is no fault of ours, however appearances may be against us. Thy friend will tell thee—and thou canst not doubt his word—that however low and mean I may be held in the estimation of the world, I am yet a virgin of unblemished character. If thou knowest of any respectable lady about to travel to Nantes, and wilt recommend me to her protection so far, even in the quality of a handmaiden, thou wilt relieve thy friend from an irksome and unprofitable task, and so far as regards myself, perform an action worthy of the calling to which thou art devoted by oath." Douglas gazed for a moment upon the face of the young woman, and then bowed with reverence.

"I have wronged you, damsel," said he, "and I cannot better make amends, than by procuring you the advantage of travelling in the suite of a family of distinction, who leave Paris for Nantes to-morrow morning. A single line which I shall now write—if, in token of forgiveness, David, you will lend me your ecritoire—provided you can deliver it into her

own hands, will ensure you a good reception from the lady. Am I pardoned, my old comrade?"

"Provided you will pardon me first," said David, and the two friends shook hands.

While Sir Archibald was writing, her protector, apparently relieved of a load of care, took the opportunity of assuring Hagar, in a whisper, that he was a man of delicacy and honour, and of the best blood in Scotland to boot;—whereof he himself, David Armstrong, unworthy as he was individually, had a certain portion in his veins, thanks to his mother, of blessed memory.

"You have no time to lose," he added, "and at any rate, it is always better, as we say, to take Occisio by the forelock: so we will both escort you to the house this blessed moment, and the affair will be arranged one way or other, on the instant."

"Not so," replied Hagar, as the knight put the missive into her hands—"I know the address, which is not far distant, and I will go alone."

"That is impossible," said Douglas, "at such an hour."

"Not to me. I have already tarried too long with you, as the eyes of the company intimate; and thy friend, Sir Knight, knoweth that I am wont to come and go without making more noise, or attracting more observation, than the shadow on the wall."

"It is even so," said the student, "let it be as she wills, Archibald, for she is wise beyond women."

"Then await me here, even till the eighth hour; and if I come not then, think that I am in safety, and that the wandering maid is praying to the All-good for her protectors!" She turned round as she spoke, and piloted her way so dexterously through a party of entering guests, and vanished so instantaneously at the door, that even the knight, who knew her less than David, was satisfied of her safety.

The scholar continued looking towards the door, in an attitude of intent listening; while Douglas regarded him with a look half of curiosity, half of such ridicule as the most serious passion in the world provokes even from those who feel most its power.

"Do you hear her footfalls still?" said he at last.

"Hear her footfalls?" replied David starting, "as well might you listen for the music of Aspendius, who touched

his lyre so lightly that the tones were inaudible to human ears! Truly, she is none of the daughters of Zion, who 'talk with stretched-forth necks, and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet.' "

"Bravo, my friend! Ever while I live I shall have more confidence in devils; for, by my faith, Hashmodai is the very god of love!"

"You are nearer the mark, Archibald, than might be predicated of your ignorance as a man of war. Hashmodai does indeed resemble in some sort the infernal Cupid—not the son of the celestial Venus—but he who was born of Erebus and Nox. They say he loved Sarah the Eebatanean woman so violently, as to strangle her seven husbands, out of jealousy, one after the other.

"And how may a man guard himself against the visits of so terrible a deity?"

"On that subject there is some difference of opinion among the learned. Many are for broiling the heart and liver of a fish on live coals, according to the advice given by the angel Raphael to Tobias; while others are more inclined to put their faith in the smoke of sulphur, notwithstanding the adverse testimony of Ovidius:

'Nec fugiat vivo sulphure victus amor.'"

"I am of the opinion of that same Ovidius, if it be against sulphur. I abominate the article, which serves for nothing else than fuel to the devil and his philosophers. But come, let us wash our mouths of the subject with a cup of wine. Ho! mine host!

"Hush, Archibald; you forget you are not now at the king's cost. We can say we are waiting for a friend, and that is God's truth, you know—Well, if it must be so; but I cannot say I approve of such extravagance when we are by ourselves."

A flagon of wine, and some walnuts, were set down by the knight's orders, and, in compliment to their genteel appearance, a small silver cup was placed between them. This pocillum, however, as he called it, David insisted upon his friend appropriating to his own use, while he contented himself with one of pewter.

"And now, Archibald," said he, "if we had the day before

us, I would willingly listen to what you are willing to tell, if you could set about it. But at this hour of the night, it behoves me to render you such assistance as may be in my power in opening your heart; for if Hagar—that is, the hooded maiden—return disappointed, it may be some days before we meet again. You love the damsel of Laval, that is the sum of your secret.”

“If a man may be said to love a star!”

“And why not? The poets feign that Cynthia herself descended to the summit of mount Latmus to kiss Endymion. Passion knows not space, nor time, nor rank. Impossibilities are its sport: yea, if the lover cannot soar high enough, the mistress descends, and so they meet, like the Latmian shepherd and the moon, between heaven and earth.”

“Thanks, David, your words stir me like a herald’s trumpet. But I would not have my love descend. For one kiss of her eyelids, I would climb that same Latmus, were it ten times higher than Ben-nevis, whose head is hidden in the clouds. And why indeed should I despair? I have an arm, a sword, a heart; my veins are filled with the blood of a hundred sires; and I walk abroad encircled by the brightness of a name, which, although it may not be made more bright, shall never be tarnished by me. O my friend, if you felt the thrill which ran through my soul, when she told me that even ‘the meanest feud would furnish a field of honour for the Bleeding Heart!’ Methinks I was a coward till that moment!” The knight started up as he spoke, as if to obtain room to breathe; and he strode across the room with a step which made the other guests start. His burning cheek and flashing eye contrasted strongly with the pale, haggard, and dispirited look of his companion.

“Your love is virtuous,” said David, in a hollow tone, when he had resumed his seat, “and therefore it is possible?”

“I never loved but her since I was a boy; no maiden have I betrayed; the name of woman was as something holy in my imagination; and to support, cherish, and defend her, I have ever considered a part of my honour as a gentleman, my oath as a knight, and my religion as a Christian.”

“Then love on without fear: for your mistress shall not assume in your dreams the form of a fiend, commissioned to waylay and destroy you!”

“How?”

"You will not see blood and tears drop from the crucifix when you pray!"

"David! your mind wanders!"

"Love which is inconsistent with honour and religion is unholy, were its object an angel—and there's an end! Now, Archibald, what are your designs?"

"I obtained speech of the damsel of Laval last night for only an instant, and she whispered something which fills me, in spite of myself, with alarm. You must know that, at the commencement of our acquaintance, I had the good fortune to rescue her from the hands of a villain, who is some relation to Orosmandel, and who, the old man believes, is now by his commands on a voyage of discovery in the African seas. This wretch the damsel saw, or imagines she saw, either in body or spirit, on the streets of Paris! To-morrow she returns to Brittany; and it is my purpose to watch over her unseen, till it be ascertained, whether the apparition was an illusion or a reality—if indeed it was not the spirit of her enemy."

"A relation of Orosmandel! Describe him, I pray you."

"I cannot. When I saw him, he was cased in black armour from head to foot, and his vizor closed." The scholar mused for some time.

"It is strange," said he, at length, "how your affairs and mine, Archibald, appear to be woven together. It is my fate to reside under the very same roof with the damsel of Laval, where I may serve you even like a familiar spirit; while the information you have just now given involves matter which, perhaps, concerns my life. *Lupus in fabula!* O holy St. Bride!—look you there, Archibald!" and, catching his friend's arm as in a vice, he motioned him to follow the direction of his eyes.

Two guests, whom they had not observed before, were about leaving the room, one an elderly, and one a middle-aged man; the former in the showiest dress of a bourgeois, and the latter without any thing in his air or habiliments which could draw observation of one kind or other.

"Let the lord de Retz be whom he may," said the bourgeois doggedly, "his debt is now large enough for a king to think worth paying; and, in short, I must have my money."

"Your money is safe," replied the other mildly; "but if you will take the counsel of a plain man, you will execute the magnificent order I have now given you, and then solicit

payment for all together. I know you come sometimes to Nantes. Why not bring the things under your own convoy? Nay, why not bring your daughter with you—I think you have a daughter—and combine pleasure with business? She would find the damsel of Laval every thing that is kind and condescending; and as for you, taken notice of by the lord de Retz, perhaps even residing for a day or two at the château, till the money was ready, (I could contrive myself to keep it back,) the echevins of the town would not know how to pay you honour enough."

"Then you think I should be sure?"

"Absolutely. What is it to me? I am paid to perform my employer's business, not to deceive."

"Well, it is a heavy outlay; but I can afford it: it shall be done."

"I knew you were wise as well as wealthy; I am not accustomed to throw my pearls to swine. Good night."

"Good night—and with my humble commendation to my honourable lord." When the agent of the lord de Retz was gone, David relaxed his gripe of his friend's arm, and, fixing his eyes on his face, whispered mysteriously,

"Who is that, think you, Archibald?"

"It is a baillie of the tailors," replied the knight with a look of surprise, "and a special friend of my own. Good even to you, messire; here is a gentleman would be glad to make your acquaintance."

"Ha, my sprig of mountain ash! do we meet again? What, still munching? still guzzling? wilt never have done? But hold! your brewing, I see, is something of the weakest; and that men say, however it may be otherwise convenient, is not overly agreeable to the Scottish palate. Argenteuil, I grant you, still maintains at least a memory of its reputation; but in general the wines of the capital may be considered misfits. Here, mine host!"

"The emperor Julian," said the scholar, "admired the wines of Lutecia; and if we are even now wetting our lips with them, it is for the sake of their classic reputation, not from motives of economy. Although I will not say but the drink is somewhat wersh as it were, and not just so comfortable to the stomach as would give a conscientious man the warrant for swallowing it of St. Paul's advice to Timothy."

"As I live, I knew the face, although the cloak was strange to mine eyes! And is it even thou, my son in the outer man?"

—or rather, son that was, for I see you have renounced your father.”

“ I have neither renounced my father nor my cloak ; but the latter, after some years of faithful service, I grieve to say it, has renounced me.”

“ What, the epitogium ab loquendum—or ad loquendum—for I never could tell the difference ? But why not come to me to replace it ? It was honestly paid for, as it was honestly made ; and you know I was never a man in that case, to distress a scholar for the amount of his bill.”

“ You misapprehend. The epitogium, though none of the newest, was still nothing less than respectable ; and if Sir Archibald, here, (whose trade, as I may say, is destruction) had kept his hands off it, there would have been no need, for some while yet, either to try the depth of your patience or of my purse. In a word, I am no longer a scholar ; and my business calls me, perhaps, in some half-hour hence, to the city of Nantes. As for my present habiliments, to be frank with you, I know not the name of the fashioner ; but I will say this for him, that he is as good a workman as ever followed the banner of St. Luce ;” and David, stretching forth his leg beyond the end of the table, so as to display as much of his figure as possible, looked with great complacency upon his flowing cloak, his coat of double cloth padded throughout with wool, and his inexpressibles double-stitched, and fortified with leather.

“ As for the workmanship—hum !—the mere needle and thread affair—I do not say that the garment will let in hail-stones bodily : but do you tell me that it would take an ell of cloth, of five quarters breadth, to make two such breeches as these ? If not, your fashioner cuts neither by conscience nor by the statute. As for the coat, it merits condemnation, inasmuch as the inner fold is evidently of old cloth, a thing strictly forbidden by law—and, for that matter, by Scripture too, as a priest once told me, under the parable of old wine and new bottles. Then, if the silk with which it is bordered has not already been on the back of a noble—a fraud common to the whole confrérie except myself—say that Jacquin Houpe-lande knows not his trade !”*

* This was not a fraud thirty years later ; for the Letters of the King, dated 24th June, 1467, relating to the *pourpointiers* of Paris, expressly permit this application of old silk to the coats of bourgeois ; the regulation setting forth, that silk which had been used by gentlemen was not too much worn for the purpose.

"God forbid that I should say any thing of the kind," replied the ex-student—"for it is well known that Jacquin Houpelande—although, in making out his accounts in Latin, for the University, he will sometimes confound the accusative and ablative prepositions—ought to be considered the king of the tailors. This, however, I will say, after an adagium, or proverb, we have among our border riders, that it is neither wise nor civil to examine too curiously the mouth of a gift-horse."

"There are confreries of less substance that have their king, as for example, the minstrels, and why not the tailors? I am the richest man of my trade, if the lord de Retz be as good as his word; I am an echevin of the city. Good youth, you are too complimentary, although no one can deny that you are passing wise withal; and I am glad to my very linings, to hear that this is an ominous suit."

"Anonymous, perhaps?"

"Well, be it so: and one which you did not bespeak, but receive as a gift. And now, as touching the wine, I was minded to order the boy to bring us a flagon of the Orleanais; but, although still somewhat in vogue, this is no more like what men say it was in the days of Louis le Jeune. As for Rochelle, you have plenty of it in Britain; what do you say if we try the brewings of Anjou, or Province, or Burgundy? Come, in a word, let us have a leathern bottle of Bordeaux, one of the most ancient, as it is one of the best of the wines of France."

"We have already drunken," interfered the knight, "and it waxes late."

"It is indeed not very far from the eighth hour," said the student, "and for my part, although beholden to you for the offer, I am not Xenagoras, nor yet Xenarchus—if these be indeed two persons—to swallow either nine or twelve gallons at a sitting. But for the wine of Bordegala, or in the vulgar tongue Bourdeaux, it is indeed an ancient drink; being celebrated in the following verses of the poet Decimus Magnus Ausonius, who flourished in the fourth century of our era—"

"Hold!" cried the echevin, "You could drink the wine in less time than you can take to praise it in poetry; or if you must needs recite, methinks a cup will be all the more necessary to wash down the Latin. And here it comes in good time. What say you, sir knight?"

"The wine, by all means, if we are to have the Latin."

"Come then, sir student, will you pledge me?"

"That will I, Jacquin, were it in the measure of Novellus, surnamed Tricongius—a matter of three gallons! The custom of pledging, Archibald, is derived from the pledges or securities offered in matters of law. When a man committed any of the lesser crimes, he escaped imprisonment previous to trial, by getting another to become his pledge; or in other words, to undertake to endure in his stead, whatever punishment might be awarded, in the event of the criminal absconding. Again, when the queen of St. Louis, in danger of shipwreck, vowed to St. Nicholas a silver boat, she satisfied the saint he should not be defrauded, by getting Joinville to become her pledge. In like manner, when a man was challenged to drink, if he found himself a weak brother, he was allowed to obtain a pledge, and so drink by proxy."

"And is it thus you would pledge me? By the holy Saint Luce, I were unworthy to be the first man in the confrerie of tailors, and an echevin of the city to boot, if I could not drink for myself! and so, messire, I empty this measure to your prosperity; touching which, I see the knight is busy consulting the dregs of his cup."

"I was thinking," said Sir Archibald, starting, "of another toast."

"And yet divination," remarked the student, "is a thing more to be condemned than despised, since, before it was forbidden by Moses in the book of Leviticus, it was practised by Joseph in Egypt, who was an augur, and had a divining cup. In our time, the manner of the ceremony is to turn towards the east, and pronounce the words, 'Abraxa, per dominum nostrum?' when the contents of the vessel will straightway show forth the inquirer's destiny."

"It is a pagan error," said the knight, setting down the cup hastily; "and if Joseph practised it, it was because he was a Jew, and no Christian!"

"You are right," cried the master-tailor, whose voice began to wax loud, "if Joseph was indeed a Jew, he could be no Christian, say I. But since there is sin in the dregs of a cup, let us fill the faster. Come, shall we sing? there is no harm in that. If you love me, sir scholar, let us have one of the priestly chants of the university;" whereupon David, to his friend's surprise, began without more solicitation, and in his usual grave and methodical manner, the following strain—

"Beuvons d'aultant au soyr et au matin
Jusqu' a cent sols,
Et ho !
A notre hotesse ne payons point d'argent
Fors ung credo,
Et ho !"

"Archibald," said he suddenly, in the midst of the echevin's plaudits, "what was the other toast of which you were thinking?"

"The Venus Dominic," replied the knight, "it is past eight o'clock."

"Come, sir Bourgeois, the bottle is out, and we thank you for your hospitality, which at another time we shall be proud to repay. Tell me, in the meantime, who is that man to whom you talked even now when my friend called you?"

"Plague on it, are you gone already? Never talk of payment except in the case of an epitogium ab ad—no, ab loquendum. But as for the man, he is a confidential agent of the lord de Retz, and that is all I know about him."

"God be with you—we shall meet again, if my auguries do not deceive me," and so saying, David drained his glass, even to the sinful dregs, and hurried away, followed by Sir Archibald."

"The decent man!" said he in a low voice, when they had left the house—"I should not wonder if that wine stood him a matter of three sous!"

They walked on for some time in silence, the knight leading the way, till they reached a very large and very handsome house, dimly seen in the moonlight.

"This is strange," said the conductor, "all is dark, and the gate is shut; they must have changed their intention, and set out this evening instead of to-morrow; I cannot comprehend it!"

"Of whom talk you?"

"Of Orosmandel and the damsel of Laval."

"Holy St. Bride! And it was to them you recommended Hagar? Archibald, the man concerning whom I even now questioned the echevin, if I have any understanding within me, was your enemy—and mine!" The knight was thunderstruck. They made every inquiry that was possible in the neighbourhood; but of the very few inhabitants whose houses were still open, not one had observed the departure of

the travellers. They then resolved to follow on the instant ; and Sir Archibald, felicitating himself on possessing a friend who felt for him in the dilemma, precisely the same as if the case had been his own. They soon found themselves, late as the hour was, without the walls of Paris, and progressing at a steady trot on the road towards Brittany.

CHAPTER IX.

At this period Brittany was under the sway of John V., a prince remarkable for neither courage nor talents, yet, who had contrived, for some time past, to preserve his duchy in comparative tranquillity in the midst of all the storms which agitated the west of Europe. The Bretons, from time immemorial, were a bold and turbulent race, engaged in almost perpetual wars and rebellions ; and if, by some miracle of chance, there occurred a moment's breathing time at home, their youth were accustomed, like the Scots, to turn soldiers of fortune, and carry their swords to foreign broils. Many of them, for instance, followed the Bastard into England ; and were not forgotten when that famous brigand divided his booty. Norfolk and Suffolk fell to the lot of Raoul de Gaël ; York to Alain Leroux ; and other rich morsels of the opima opolia to their companions.

The same fierce and factious spirit animated the peasants ; and it is a curious circumstance, and one not adverted to by any historian we remember, that in this country of heroines the signal for the servile wars was given by a woman. In the eleventh century, when duke Geoffroi was hunting, his falcon stooped unbidden upon a chicken ; when the amazon to whom it belonged instantly caught up a stone, and whirled it at the head of the prince. The blow was fatal to the duke, and had nearly been so to the whole body of the nobles ; for a general rising of the peasants took place immediately after ; which the widow of the murdered prince, who, according to the Breton custom, led on the nobles in person, found much difficulty in putting down.

If the national character of the Bretons resembled that of the Scots, the history of the two countries, in like manner,

presented various points of resemblance. From the year 1340, the little state was torn asunder by two powerful families, one wearing the ducal crown, and one seizing every opportunity to grasp at it. The Montforts and Penthievres of Brittany, were the Stuarts and Douglasses of Scotland; with this difference, that in the latter country the heroes of the two parties were men; in the former, women. Jane of Flanders, commonly called the Countess de Montfort, and her rival, Jane de Penthievre, with the exception, perhaps, of the illustrious Virgin of Dom-Rémi, were no doubt the most remarkable of all the warrior-women mentioned in modern history.

France and England took part in this bloody feud; the former on the side of the pretending, and the latter on that of the reigning house. Brittany therefore became the battlefield of these two great powers; and the centre, in consequence, to which military adventurers and ruffians of all kinds flocked from the rest of Europe. Even when a truce took place in 1354, between the two rival kings, it was stipulated, strangely enough, that the struggle of the Montforts and Penthievres was to go on as usual; and thus the country, when no longer the seat of national war, was torn in pieces by petty convulsions, and ravished by banditti instead of armies. Marauders of all nations traversed the soil from end to end, leaving the print of their footsteps in blood and ashes; and, whether in the pay of France or England, when compelled by the truce to relax their gripe from each other's throats, they threw themselves, shoulder to shoulder, upon the natives. An outrage committed by one of these brigands was eventually the cause of the famous Battle of the Thirty; a duel fought on foot between the English and Bretons; and decided in favour of the latter by one of their combatants betaking himself to his horse—a treason for which, in the purer times of chivalry, he would have lost his head.

Jane de Penthievres' husband at length died; peace was proclaimed; and Brittany remained the vassal of France. Duguesclin relieved the country of many of the brigands, who were now called the Great Companies, by carrying them off to attempt the conquest of Spain; but some new contentions began between France and England, and, in consequence, new troubles in Brittany, new massacres, new burnings; and at the sound of the first trumpet of war, new banditti arose as suddenly in the land as the host of Rhoderick Dhu. Among

them, perhaps, should be reckoned the famous, or rather infamous, Olivier de Clisson, who carried fire and sword through the country on his own account.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, John V. ascended the ducal throne, vacant by the assassination of his father; and for many years his reign was as calamitous as those of his ancestors. At one time he was himself carried off bodily by the Penthievres; but his party getting the upper hand, this powerful family was at length crushed. His friendship, it may be supposed, was now courted by the French as well as English, the affairs of both in France being in a very critical state. But John, taught by experience, and perhaps benefiting even by a want of strength in his character, treated with both, and acted as little as possible for either. At the epoch of our story, therefore, the curious spectacle was presented of this little state, which had so long been the shuttlecock of two mighty nations, playing the coquette between them; and of John V., who possessed nothing in his character remarkable in one way or other, setting the example to succeeding sovereigns of that subtle species of policy which since his time has so frequently been practised on a larger scale.

Sometimes the ostensible ally of England, and sometimes of France, Brittany was the place of refuge both for French and English; and the recruiting officers of both nations might be seen plying their trade in the same villages. As for the system of brigandage, although not put down, it was at least kept in check; and altogether, the country, if not quiet, was at least as much so as could be expected where so many elements of disorder existed.

Douglas and Armstrong found little difficulty in traversing the French territory, through which their road lay; for, since the victory of Montereau, all this part of the country was in the hands of Charles VII. But they had no sooner crossed the frontiers, than the scene changed. Sometimes they were challenged as they passed a solitary chateau, and sometimes even detained to answer questions, the real drift of which was, probably, nothing else than to discover whether they were worth robbing. Their appearance in the villages excited suspicion and distrust; and occasionally they found that they were dogged by one of the peasants till he had seen them fairly out of the district.

The two friends, however, were "canny Scots." They

took things as quietly as they could, talking companionably to the men, and making themselves at home in the cottages; where David joked in scholar-like fashion with the young women, and, like King Alfred, helped the old wife to toast her cakes. When all this would not do, they made no scruple of taking by force what was necessary for their own and their horses' subsistence; for the laws of Black Archibald of Douglas were no more attended to in cases of necessity, on the Scottish borders than on the borders of Brittany. It would have been hard to tell, indeed, for which mode of "living on the road" the friends were best calculated, since they were at once courteous and brave, gentle, social, and good-tempered, yet

"Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
As ever drove prey from Cumberland!"

They had been able to preserve the whole way the track of the damsel of Laval, which they had found soon after leaving Paris; and David's mind was relieved by the certainty that Hagar was of the party, while Prelati was not. Soon after entering the Angevine territory, they had found themselves in the midst of the endless estates of the lord de Retz; and the hopes of the young knight, as he gazed around him, grew colder and colder at every step. They passed Champtoce, one of the most celebrated strongholds of the family, the gaunt ruins of which still look down upon the road between Angers and Nantes. They traversed the town of Ingrande, one half of which was in Anjou, and the other half in Brittany; and yet still found that every thing around them—town and country—belonged to the lord de Retz. After entering Brittany, his possessions still continued to present themselves, one after another; and almost every question they asked respecting the ownership of a tower or fortress was answered with the words, "a domain of the lord de Retz."

It may be supposed that the progress through the country of the daughter of a house like this, attended by an escort of two hundred men at arms, excited no small sensation. All Brittany, in fact, seemed to be astir; the motions of the fair traveller were as publicly known as those of the sun in full day; and our two adventurers, receiving fresh information at every step, were able to continue their course at the exact distance of the small number of miles which they judged it proper to leave between them and the object of their espial.

By carefully comparing notes, Sir Archibald and his friend had come to the unavoidable conclusion, that the Black Knight, as Pauline had proposed to style him—and whom David, in his own mind, identified with Prelati—was actually in the country, and by the connivance of Orosmandel himself. He was employed in the confidential affairs of the lord de Retz; he was even in the habit, as might have been gathered from his conversation with the echevin-tailor, of residing at the château. It was impossible, however, that the lord de Retz could know that he was the same individual who had attempted to carry off his daughter; and the philosopher, therefore, was guilty of at least culpable deceit towards his employer. On a former occasion, this old man had suffered himself to be led into a dangerous mistake, by the amiable prejudices of blood and family. Might not this be the case again? The knight, who was one of those men who may be said to be constitutionally generous, made the inquiry doubtfully; but the suspicions of David, who had received through his companion new materials for speculation, without being at liberty to give his own in exchange, was not disposed to view the affair so favourably. He came at once to the conclusion, that wise as the philosopher might be, he, and through him the lord de Retz, were the dupes of Prelati; and the scholar's own mission to the château was now no longer to extend his acquisitions in science, but to serve his friend, and arrive at promotion, credit, perhaps fortune, by baffling the designs of a villain.

But this fine dream was occasionally disturbed by conversations they heard on the road respecting the lord de Retz; and David, who was only superstitious in matters of science, was at once provoked and amused by the supernatural causes assigned for the natural, however uncommon, circumstance of a prodigious fortune.

"Wait, wait," said an old peasant—"it will not last. Ill gotten, ill gone."

"But how was it ill gotten?" demanded the scholar; "dowries, and legacies, methinks, go frequently enough with marriages and deaths."

"You are right," replied the old man; "in our time the devil rarely works miracles: it is the common accidents of life that are his tools."

"Hold there," interposed another; "if the devil does not work miracles, what say you to the adventure of old Chris-

tine, who picked up the pieces of silver which Gilles de Retz threw among the crowd? For fear of losing them, she laid them carefully by in a stocking, and going to the fair to buy a cow, brought the owner home with her for the money. Instead of silver coins, she found in her stocking only a few withered leaves; and the man, who had lost the chance of selling his cow, and been taken many miles out of his way, thinking that it was a cheat, beat her so severely that to this hour she keeps her bed!"

"Ill gotten, ill gone!" repeated the first peasant.

"Then I presume, my friends," said David, "that if the lord de Retz were to throw his money among us here, it would lie untouched upon the ground."

"I would say an ave before I looked at it," replied one

"I would take it straightway to the church," said another, "and dip it in holy water."

"Does he often practise liberality? Does he live agreeably to his fortune?"

"He gives away his gold (if gold it be), as freely as men give withered leaves. No king in Europe keeps half his state; and the prince of Brittany himself, arrayed in scarlet and furs, would show by his side like one of his hired retainers."

"Ill gotten, ill gone!" groaned the first peasant again.

"For that matter," said a man who had joined the group in the middle of the conversation, "it begins to go already. I am just from Nantes, where it is all the talk that Gilles de Retz is selling his estates to the duke, league by league, and that the thing gives sore displeasure to the whole family of Laval."

This intelligence was the most interesting part of the conversation to our two travellers; the rest being set down as nothing more than the exaggerations and delusions of ignorance. David thus knew that the lord de Retz was at one and the same time in debt to his tradesmen, borrowing money from the Jews, and selling his estates piecemeal. Could this ruin—for such it was—be occasioned by nothing more than the usual extravagances of a man of rank? Would not the sale even of a single estate have been sufficient, to cover any probable embarrassment? Was it certain that Prelati had authority to extort a loan from messire Jean? might he not have done this on his own account, though in the name of his lord?—and might he not, in the same way, have embezzled

the money destined to pay Houpelande, and, perhaps, many others? If it was still his purpose to carry off the damsel of Laval—behold her dowry!

With regard to Orosmandel, they were more and more perplexed at every step. The peasants were not ignorant of the existence of such a person, but they declined speaking of him, except in the most general terms; a thing that was the more extraordinary, as no one seemed to have any thing but good to tell. They never pronounced his name themselves; but as soon as it was mentioned, hastened to say a few words of commendation, and then shrunk from the subject. On one occasion, in the parlour of a village inn, David, determined to gratify his curiosity, was so pointed in his questions, that the company, consisting of peasants and travellers of humble condition, unable longer to evade them, got up hastily and left the room in a body.

“Will you not speak?” he said, seizing a rustic beauty by the arm, as she was vanishing at the door, “why do you fly?” The girl turned towards him a face which he had selected from the rest on account of its more than common intelligence, and with terror and warning in her eyes, replied in a whisper:

“Imitate our silence, if you be wise! Ask not questions which we cannot answer if we would, and would not if we could;—but above all things, name not a name which we know by experience the very winds of the desert can carry more than a hundred miles.”

Musing on these things, the two friends pursued their journey, at the slow pace which was necessary in order to keep them from coming within sight of the procession. They had, hitherto, travelled with a circumspectness sufficient to have concealed them even from the ken of a wizard; avoiding, since they had crossed the frontiers of Brittany, not only the castles, but the monasteries, although these, generally speaking, were the only places of harbour which answered the purpose of inns to travellers of their rank. As they now entered further and further into the country of the lord de Retz, it was proper, if possible, to be still more cautious; and on the present occasion, when it was necessary at twilight to halt till the following morning, finding no shelter at hand of the kind they wished, they did not hesitate to encamp for the night under a tree.

The spot was on one of those magnificent coteaux which

sweep suddenly, yet hardly precipitously, down to the brink of the Loire. The shadows of evening hung heavily upon the river; and its numerous islands and sand-banks rose dimly through the mist. The world was steeped in a kind of dreamy silence, only interrupted by the distant sound of the waters, rising indistinctly and brokenly upon the ear, like the murmur of one who sleeps. On a neighbouring eminence, surrounded by tall trees, stood a fortress, keeping guard, as it might have seemed, over the enchanted scene. It was there that the damsel of Laval reposed for the night; and on that dusky, grim, and threatening object, were the eyes of her lover fixed, like those of a mariner, who watches the star which guides him over the deep.

It may be supposed that neither Douglas nor his friend were much inclined to sleep under such circumstances; for the fortress contained a cynosure for David, as well as the knight, although gleaming, as our scholar dreaded, with more unholy splendour. Of the two, however, he of the hauberk was more vigilant in his watch; and long after his friend was fast asleep, Sir Archibald continued to gaze and to dream.

He at length rose up in that slight degree of fever which attends unwonted sleeplessness, and began to pace slowly the plateau of the hill. By degrees, and almost unconsciously, he extended his walk in the direction of the fortress, till he could see its turrets clearly defined against the sky.

At such an hour there was little risk of observation, and yet he hesitated to advance needlessly from the trees which covered the side of the hill into the unsheltered plain that lay between him and the eminence whereon the castle stood. He remained, therefore, in the black shadow of the grove, leaning against the trunk of an oak, of which he himself might have seemed to form a portion, even the parti-coloured emblazonments on his coat of arms resembling, in the obscurity, some of the thousand tints of autumn by which he was surrounded.

His eyes were fixed upon the fortress, and his thoughts were busy with her it contained; while the idea of the black knight flitted ever and anon, like a spectre, across his dream.

"Oh!" said he, almost aloud, "that it were my fate to meet with him again! If unable to cope with him in mortal strife, I should be unfit to wear the prize for which we contend, and the sooner I hid my dishonoured head in the grave

the better. But what are his advantages? Neither in name nor blood, neither in strength nor courage: and for that magical prestige which is said to surround him in his connexion with Orosmandel, I could well trust to a Christian's mass, and a soldier's sword. Come, skulking traitor, even if backed by all the fiends in the abyss! In *her* cause I defy thee and them.—Appear! I summon thee!”

The invocation, as is usual with such bursts of youthful enthusiasm, was spoken aloud towards the close, and in a tone of the same earnestness with which a man summons an enemy who is within hearing. When he had finished, Douglas, after gazing breathlessly for a moment, pressed his hands upon his eyes, like one who would drive away some illusion called up by the enchantments of imagination; but on looking again towards the distance, the object of his wonder had not passed away. It was a human figure, standing in the middle of the small, lonely plain, which, but a few minutes before, he had himself been withheld from traversing by the fear of being observed from the battlements of the distant fortress.

A momentary thrill of terror passed through the blood of the young knight; but, crossing himself devoutly, and calling in one breath upon his saint and his lady, he unsheathed his sword, and stood upon his defence. In another instant his recollection returned, and he dropped the point of his weapon. Why should he suppose this to be a supernatural visitation? The ghostly enemy did not confront him, when invoked, face to face, as was the regular process; but made his appearance at a considerable distance, and seemed to approach gradually like an ordinary man. Some dark clouds were sailing sluggishly across the sky: might not their shadow, although unobserved by him, have concealed this wanderer of the knight till he had gained the middle of the plain? Nay, could he even tell how long his pre-occupation of mind had lasted, or that it had not been strong enough to prevent his taking cognizance of such an object, when actually present to his eyes?

While these ideas passed rapidly through the knight's mind, the figure continued to approach in a direct line. It was, as might have been expected, that of an armed man; for none else would venture out at such an hour. It was at length near enough to be seen distinctly. It was the figure

of a tall man, sheathed in armour from head to foot. It was the Black Knight !

Douglas's first impulse was to advance from the shadow of the trees, in order to meet his challenged foe in the open plain ; but the sword of the latter was still in its scabbard, and his attitude was not that of a man prepared to encounter an enemy.

"It may be after all," thought the Scot, who would rather have attacked a whole army than a single opponent offered to him by magical art, "it may be after all, that this is nothing more than a coincidence. Let me, in the first place, watch what is his errand. If it be to me, I am ready, My challenge has been given ; and, if he heard it, he will answer." At the moment the sable figure, who was now near enough to have been struck by a lance thrown from the hand, stood suddenly still. Douglas felt that his eyes were fixed upon him ; but neither party moved. At length the stranger, raising his arm above his head, with a gesture which might have been either of menace or invitation—for he was now half hidden in the dark shadow of the trees—turned abruptly away, skirting with a quick but noiseless step, the confines of the wood. Sir Archibald, at this spectacle, had much difficulty to repress a shout of defiance which rose to his lips ; but, calling to mind his purpose of watching the motions of the enemy, he muttered anew an invocation to his patron saint, and glided after him with a pace as stealthy as his own.

They coasted for some time round the involutions of the wood, which at length became so numerous that Sir Archibald began to be in doubt as to whether it would be possible for him to find his way back to his sleeping comrade. He quickened his step, but did not gain upon the retreating knight. He called out to him to turn, in the usual terms of challenge ; but the dark figure continued gliding dimly before him, like a phantasm seen in a dream. Our adventurer at length stood still in amazement, not unallied to superstitious terror ; and at that moment the figure stopped also, and turning round, made another sign with the arm.

Douglas renewed his pursuit, but more slowly ; for the ground was here broken and uneven, and at any rate, he perceived that he whom he followed now awaited his approach. The inequalities of the soil were not greater than those in which antiquarians sometimes discover the vestiges of a Roman

camp ; and as the space was open for a considerable distance, he could see distinctly enough, notwithstanding the growing obscurity of the hour, the form of the sable knight standing tall and lonely in the midst. Sir Archibald stepped forward more quickly, for he was now close to the object of his pursuit ; arranging his dress as he advanced, and loosening his sword in the scabbard, like a man who prepares for an immediate and desperate encounter. These operations, however, could not have withdrawn his eyes from the motionless figure before him for more than a few seconds : and yet, on raising his head to address his enemy, he found that the spot whereon he had stood was vacant. No rock, no stone, no bush, no tree large enough to conceal the figure of a man was within many hundred yards ; a deep silence reigned on the desert place ; and as Douglas gazed wildly around him, the idea took possession of his mind, that he had all the time been walking in his sleep, and had just awakened from a dream.

No process of reasoning could account for what he had seen. If the figure had been in bodily presence that of the Black Knight, was it likely that this desperado, who had not shrunk from his sword even when it was backed by those of two of his followers, would have declined meeting him on an equal field ? If a phantom presented to him by magical art, and this seemed the more rational supposition of the two, was it commissioned express from hell for the doughty purpose of leading him a short distance out of his way ? He had heard of men who had been unhorsed and wounded by spectre-knights ; but, on the present occasion, his antagonist's triumph appeared to consist in causing him to extend a little his midnight walk, in order to leave him suddenly alone on a desert plain !

At all events, it was necessary to regain his camp with as little delay as possible ; otherwise, he should have to enter on the morrow, and its increasing chance of adventure, after a sleepless night. The place could not be far distant, nor very difficult to find ; for it was on lofty ground, which would doubtless present itself after he had walked on for a few minutes in any direction. The night was hazy, but could hardly be called dark ; for the moon was at least dimly visible through the film which overspread the sky.

Sir Archibald walked on, thoughtful and perplexed, directing his steps towards the nearest eminence. A little way beyond this he saw, without much surprise the main road ; and

entering it with alacrity he proceeded at a brisk pace in search of the opening where he and his friend had left it to seek an encampment for the night. He had not gone far, however, when the appearance of a low roofed hut, built against a bank which lined the right-hand side of the highway, convinced him that he was beyond the place; for a shelter of this kind, had they been aware of its existence, would have seemed to our travellers greatly preferable to the open air. After standing undecided for a moment, he was about to turn back, with a hearty anathema directed against the phantom-knight, when the door of the cottage opened, and a female, putting forth her head, enveloped in a hood, beckoned him to approach.

"Is it you at last, messire?" said she in a low voice, "I had given up all hope of seeing you; although, there being no nearer shelter even for a dog, I could not conjecture what had become of you."

"For whom do you take me, my pretty maid?" demanded Douglas, paying this compliment to an extremely handsome face, which he saw dimly, peeping from under the peasant's hood."

"For a foreign knight; by your garb and tongue; and for for a friend to the damsel of Laval, by your brightening glance and flushing cheek, when we talked of her this morning in the hostelry."

"By my faith, you have a keen eye for such matters," said the knight; "but does its ken extend no further? Why have you sat up so late by this hazy moon, which seems fitter to light a spectre through the church-yard, than to serve as the lamp of love?"

"Where is your friend?" demanded the young woman impatiently, without regarding this address; "why tarries he? In this country, Sir Knight, you should be aware, fellow-travellers are only too happy to have the advantage of one another's protection, even in daylight."

"It is a country, I allow, where a nian may meet with strange comrades under the beams of the moon. But as to my friend, I trow he is fast asleep on a hill side, somewhere about two miles off; for you shall know that he and I came from a land where weary travellers are not nice about their lodgings."

"I am sorry for it; for I would trust more to his keen eye and ready tongue, than to the sharp sword of ere a knight of you all!"

"Nay, as for that," said the knight who had no touch of envy in his disposition, "my friend lacks not a sharp sword to boot, nor yet a stout heart and strong arm to use it. But come, the time flies apace: let me know your trouble; and if your quarrel be good, this poor weapon of mine may even stead you as well as another."

"I would there had been two!" said the young woman; "and yet, against odds of at least a score, what matters it? Come on, Sir Knight, follow me, in the name of God, and for the sake of your lady love!" and, gliding away from the hut, she pressed up the steep bank beside it, with an agility which cost the knight, cumbered as he was with thirty or forty pounds weight of armour, no little exertion to emulate.

"I call you to notice," said he, when they had gained the summit, "that the odds you mention, although they may possibly be held at bay for a moment in the melee till rescue comes up, cannot be opposed, with the slightest chance of eventual success, by a single sword. I am willing, in terms of my knightly oath, to attempt in your behalf all that man may attempt; but still, I pray you to remember, I can do no more than man may do."

"Listen," replied the girl, "and waste not time in speaking. This is not the first time I have committed myself to the protection of the most holy St. Julian. Last year I made another journey, in the course whereof I was overrun, and trampled on the ground by a furious horseman. On that occasion my life was preserved by the damsel of Laval; who, forgetting the meanness of my rank in the greatness of my misfortune, caused me to be carried into one of her father's castles, where she tended me, even like a young mother nursing her sick child."

"Weep not, good wench," said the knight, "touching the corners of his eyes with his gloves; weep not, but say on; for I already take upon me the adventure you have to propose."

"The times have now turned round," continued she; "I am well and safe; and the damsel herself is this night in sorer peril than that from which she rescued me."

"St. Bride of Bothwell!" cried Douglas, "what is this? Why, trifter, did you not speak at once? *She* in peril! Say on, thou prating fool."

"Hush! hush! I thought—" and she shook her head—"I thought from the first that the other would have been the

better man ! But still, even a mere warrior is better than nobody at all ; and the moment is now come when something must be done. Sir Knight, it was known to-day in this country-side, that there was some mischief brewing for the house of Laval. The lord de Retz is said to be stripping his house-tree, branch by branch, by the sale of his estates to the sovereign duke. The remonstrances of his kindred have been listened to with coldness by the buyer, and with haughty and indignant surprise by the seller ; and it is thought that the end will be nothing less than a civil war in Brittany. Now, if you are astonished that such an event could be brought about by the quarrels of a single family—”

“Tush ! I am astonished at nothing of the kind :—it is our way over the water. Go on, in the name of God !”

“There is something more, however, than the mere sale of the estates. Gilles de Retz is a man of such prodigious pride, that the heavens themselves do not seem to him to be high enough for a canopy for his head. More than one bold baron, claiming kindred with himself, has already demanded his daughter, and been scornfully refused ; and it is now believed that he looks far over the crests of them all for a husband for the heiress of Laval. If this be true, whatever may be the cause which sets them to loggerheads, the damsel will be snatched at in the confusion by more than one gauntleted hand ; and this very hour it will be debated among the malcontents, whether she shall not be seized upon her journey, and detained as a hostage till all questions are settled between them and the lord de Retz.”

“How know you this ?” demanded Douglas, “and who are you who speak above your seeming rank ?”

“My rank is what it seems ; although being the favourite niece of a priest—whose soul be happy !—I received better instruction than I have use for. My real insignificance, and apparent ignorance, united with accident, have allowed to come to my knowledge what I have told you. Is this enough ? Am I right in guessing you to be one who would venture life and limb in the service of the damsel of Laval ? Am I right in supposing that the principal, if not only purpose, of your journey, has direct reference to her ?”

“You are right,” replied Douglas.

“Then, messire, since I have gathered this from words and looks marked by no one else, and probably unconscious even to yourself, I demand of you credit for more quickness

of wit than you would expect to find under a peasant's hood ! Now listen. In yonder ruined castle, once a powerful stronghold of the family of Laval, and now not altogether the ruin it might seem to be, the malcontents meet within an hour, for the purpose of receiving certain information from Nantes, and debating on what is to be done in consequence. Their number will be unknown to themselves ; and they will repair to the rendezvous at this dead hour, cased in armour, and probably vizor-closed, distrusting even one another, until they absolutely ascertain that it will be prudent or necessary to form the league in contemplation. Go thou too, sir knight !—go boldly in among the rest, and observe what is said and done ! Having learnt this, take what steps may seem wisest to you as a practised soldier, for the rescue—if it be necessary—of the damsel. As for me, my part is fulfilled ; and if the very worst happen, I shall be able to weep without self-reproach.”

“ What is the worst ? ” said Douglas, in a constrained whisper—“ Even if a captive, will she not be in the hands of her own kinsmen, and those who wooed her for their bride ? ”

“ Ask me not ! ask me not ! ” replied the damsel, drawing her hood over her face—“ This is a wild country, and these are fearful times. No matter with whom the damsel may be a captive :—she will find herself in the hands of a brigand, ready to commit *any* crime that might serve to secure his prize ! ”

“ Enough. Yonder ruined turret is the place, scarcely taller than the trees that surround it ? But stay—the name which you this morning forbade—”

“ Stay not for names. Away, if you be a man ! ”

“ I would but ask, if timely notice given to Orosmandel — ” but at the word, the young woman dived down the steep of the bank ; and Douglas, turning away with an exclamation less courteous than was his wont, pursued his way towards the ruin.

CHAPTER X.

As Sir Archibald approached the spot, he found that although the turret, when seen at a distance, certainly gave the idea of a place long since abandoned to the owls, there were other parts of the building in better preservation. It seemed to have been one of the strongest of those strong castles for which Brittany was once renowned; and although now in ruins, and altogether deserted, except by a keeper of humble rank, its fortifications and outworks, as well as a portion of the interior, were in the taste of the last century.

The edifice stood upon the steep of a thickly-wooded hill, the sides of which were broken, and rendered of difficult access by rocks, ravines, and precipices. The faint light of the moon only revealed the outlines of the loftiest towers, while the rest of the building was enveloped in doubtful shadow. An air of dusky and mysterious grandeur presided over the whole object; and as Douglas, after crossing the moat by a permanent bridge, approached the gate, he half expected his summons to be answered by one of those goblin forms of which he had heard in the tales of the minstrels.

The gateway, however, was open, and the door half embedded in the earth. The arch was ornamented with heads of wolves and wild boars grinning down upon the visitor: it was flanked at either corner by turrets, where the warders once kept their ceaseless watch; and surmounted, in the middle, by a lofty corps-de-garde. Three ditches he thus passed, and three walls, from six to eight feet thick; and while traversing the dreary courts between, our traveller, it must be said, trode softly, rather from feeling than policy, as if thinking that even the sound of his armed heels upon the ground was there an intrusion and an impertinence.

He at length found himself in the great square court, surrounded by the buildings of the castle. Underneath were the cellars, the subterraneans, and the prisons; above these, on the ground story, the habitable apartments, as well as the stables, fowl-houses, and dovecotes, to the right and left of the gate; and on the upper story, the stores, larders, and arsenals. The whole of the roofs of this grand square were bordered by parapets macheconlis, chemins-de-ronde, and turrets. In the centre of the court was the lofty donjon, rising like an

enormous tower from the midst of the surrounding buildings, and containing the state apartments, and the treasury. This, which might be called the heart of the fortress, was encircled by a deep ditch; and although its walls, like those of the other parts of the edifice, were at least six feet thick, it was further strengthened by a shirt, or second wall of equal thickness, formed of solid blocks of cut stone, and rising to one half the height of the donjon itself. ♪

The prodigious strength of the donjon, as might have been expected, had withstood more successfully than the rest of the building the effects of neglect and time. The sides of the square of which Douglas made the complete tour, were in some places open to the weather, and in all, ruined and desolate. Sometimes, by the uncertain light of the moon falling through the broken roofs of the chambers, many of which were vaulted, he could see the remains of the stained glass with which their ogive windows had been adorned. In some apartments, the floor was paved in squares of different colours; in others, the pillars which supported the joists were still encrusted with fillets and flowers of tin; in others, the walls still showed the remains of paintings, representing figures as large as life, holding scrolls in their hands, on which it was the custom, in great houses, to inscribe moral sentences for the edification of the guests.

Having ascertained that the meeting could be held in none of the ordinary apartments of the castle, our adventurer now proceeded with a firm step, but an anxious heart, to the donjon; and having crossed the moat by a drawbridge, embedded in the earth, and long since become a permanent avenue, he struck with the hilt of his sword upon the mouldering door. When the hollow echoes of the sound had died away, he heard a voice within, followed by the efforts of some feeble or unsteady hand to withdraw the bolt.

"There is the last!" said the voice, in a cracked treble, "By St. Gildas! there hath scarce been such a jubilee in my time; no, not since the murder of the young lord in the Devil's Chamber.* He! he! he! What, art sleep old Raoul? Put thy pith to it, man, as if feigning thou wast flesh and blood, instead of a dried skinful of rotting bones. 'Slife!

* *In Camera Diabolorum—in Camera Viride*, and similar names taken either from the colour of the tapestry, or the representations it contained, occur in the manuscript inventories of the fourteenth century.

I must help thee myself, although I am the seneschal, and thou only my valet. Now, stand on one side, and hold thy skeleton erect while he enters, for the credit of the house of Laval !”

Douglas was received with a profound bow by the personage calling himself the seneschal; a little withered man, at the very verge of human life, with a beard as white as snow, who leant on a stick of the same colour, taller than himself, and resembling the rod of a gentleman usher. The appearance of the valet was in nowise different from that of his master, except in dress, and also by his skeleton being rounded at the back like a bow, whereas, that of the other was as straight and official-looking as his wand.

“There be no more of you, I trow, messire?” said the seneschal, in the tone of asking a question, of which he knew the answer, while the valet shut and bolted the door.

“I know not,” replied Douglas, “are there many before me?”

“A round dozen! twelve, as I am a sinner! Is it not thus, Raoul?”

“Yea: he is the thirteenth.”

“He! he! he! said I not so? Go to: it is not a man who hath kept a house like this for fifty years, that thou wilt find napping. I knew his tread the moment he entered the inner gate; tramp, tramp, tramp, it went round the square—and thou, like a superannuated fool, would have called him in, as if he wanted bidding of ours? Wait, said I, wait, old Raoul; have but a grain of patience, for those feet will carry him here, were his eyes shut, and a tombstone on his back. Said I not so?—the very words?”

“Yea,” answered Raoul, “I will not gainsay it.”

“He! he! he! See what it is to be a fellow of experience! Tramp, tramp, tramp, came the footsteps again by the other side of the square; and knock! knock! knock! went the hilts against the door! Thou art the thirteenth, sir knight, and there’s an end!”

“That was the number then expected!”

“Nay—twelve,” interposed Raoul.

“Thou wilt talk! God sain thee, neighbour! Alas, old Raoul! And in troth, sir knight, it was twelve, as this poor man says—but when will the devil be left out of such a reckoning? Now, the twelfth man, you must know, was to have been the victim!”

"How!"

"It is gospel-true. Have I lied, old Raoul? Speak up, if thou yet hoarded a morsel of tongue for the worms!"

"It was the twelfth man—I will not gainsay it: and more-over—"

"Moreover! Moreover what? Over twelve? Why, that would give thyself the lie; for, over twelve is thirteen. And so, messire, it being a dark moon, like this of to-night, and one of the company, whose heart failed him, slipping behind the tapestry to be out of the mischief, the twelfth man, entering with vizor closed like the rest, was counted for the eleventh. Thus did he escape, surrounded by ten hands, each grasping its misericorde.* But even as St. Abraham was tricked by the devil, who caused him to sacrifice his own flesh and blood, instead of a good fat buck; even so was foiled that day the lord de Retz. For, lo you know, sir knight! who should enter thereupon, unwished for, and unbidden? Who, I say, should mount those very stairs, against the will of those who kept them? Who should force himself, head and shoulders, into an affair with which he had no more business than thou? Who, but the young lord himself? I tell you, Sir, there were ten daggers clashed in his body in the same instant; and his fathers clashed the loudest! Is it not so, old Raoul? Answer, if there be anything but mere bones within thy skin? Hold up thy defunct face, and tell me, whether I have lied!"

"Thou hast spoken truly; I will not gainsay it; and, by the same token, the castle from that day was suffered to fall into ruin; being deserted by all but you and me, who were left in charge, and—"

"And another! He! he! he! Well said, old Raoul! Well said, i'faith! And so, sir knight, being the thirteenth, as I have said, we bid you heartily welcome!"

The entrance hall was not deep enough to require much time to traverse it; and yet the thirteenth visitor—although appearing disdainful and impatient—did not reach the farther end, till the last words of this ominous tale had fallen upon his ear. He then, partly deceived by the want of light—for the place was only illuminated by a single lamp fixed to the

* The small dagger which the knights made use of to dispatch the enemies they had overthrown; so called, from the exclamation for "mercy," with which the vanquished could avert the blow.

wall—and partly, from pre-occupation of mind, instead of mounting the great staircase, struck into a dim opening beside it. He discovered his mistake after ascending two or three steep and narrow steps, and returned hastily. The two old men were looking eagerly towards the spot, with a ghastly smile on their faces; but when the knight made his appearance again at the opening, the merriment of the seneschal broke forth in a shrill, cracked, “He! he! he!” and was joined, for the first time, by the laugh of his comrade, which sounded as if it came from a coffin.

“That is the way thou must go,” said he of the wand, “for it is the stair of the Thirteenth; and, being wiser to-day than we were fifty years ago, we will not try to stay thee. Tell me, old Raoul, for thou wert by; did not the young lord dart into that door, when we held him off from mounting the great stair with the point of our weapons? Open thy jaws and answer if thou hast any dregs of life in thee.”

“He did so; I will not gainsay it. Yet nevertheless, it was by the great stair he returned.”

“Well said, old Raoul, well said, i’ faith; now answer me again; unclosethy lips once more, if they be any thing else than musty parchment, damp with mouldiness, and worm-eaten like a coffin that hath served two corses,—after what manner came he down the great stair? Expound, as thou be’st a true valet! Ha?”

“He! he! he! Heels foremost! He! he! he!”

“He! he! he! By St. Gildas, thou art a rare companion, all that is left of thee! I tell thee what, Sir Knight, it is of no use to stand shilly-shallying. About face, and away with thee, for thou canst not choose.”

The feelings may be conceived with which Douglas listened to such ominous discourse, between two creatures who, although dressed like living men, and standing on their legs, looked as if a winding-sheet was their usual costume, and the grave their abiding-place. Their laugh, however, although it had chilled his blood more than their words, sounded so much like a taunt that his knightly pride was at length roused. He remembered that the secret passage was the best and safest avenue he could take in his present character; and controlling as well as possible, the kind of horror which crept through his blood, he turned round, as the seneschal directed; and, without uttering a word, began anew to ascend the steep staircase. He was pursued for some time, as he

climbed, by the ghastly laugh of the old men; but, praying fervently to every saint whose name he could recollect in the confusion of the moment, he at length found himself out of hearing.

He was in utter darkness; and the stair, besides being so steep and irregular that, in more than one place, he was obliged to use hands and knees in the ascent, was so close and damp that he might have fancied himself in a burying vault. The idea again occurred to him, that he was walking in his sleep; and the wild legend he had just heard, relating, as it appeared, to an ancestor—perhaps the grandfather—of the present lord de Retz, seemed only a natural sequel to his dream.

At length, however, he was once more on even ground. The floor felt smooth beneath his feet, as if it was of marble, or polished tiles; and he heard a sound as if of the *silence* of a group of human beings close at hand. He was no doubt in the Devil's Chamber; although still in utter darkness, because of the tapestry, which he felt hanging before him. He did not venture to touch the fold of the cloth, which he knew must be opposite the staircase, in order to admit secret visitors into the room; but speedily a faint gleam of light conducted him to a place where there were several circular holes, the size of a man's head, and about the same distance from the ground. These were, of course, for the purpose of espial, and enabled the hidden spectator to substitute his own face for that of the figure wrought on the tapestry. Here, therefore, our adventurer took his stand; and here he beheld a picture which might have afforded worthy materials, even for the skilful needle that had adorned the walls.

The room was lofty; and, from the gracefulness of its Gothic ceiling and windows, would have looked light and elegant but for a single enormous pillar in the middle, as thick as a full-grown oak, which supported the vault, beginning to mingle gradually with the nave of the arches when little more than midway from the ground. This gave a stern and heavy aspect to the hall, well befitting the appearance and purpose of its present guests; who consisted of about a dozen men, clothed in iron from head to foot, some leaning against the pillar, half hidden in its shadow; some standing motionless with crossed arms; and some resting, with their hands clasped on the hilts of their mighty swords, breast high. The room was completely hung with tapestry, repre-

senting devils in a thousand grotesque yet terrible attitudes; and as the faint and flickering beams of the moon, now glanced upon the armour of the mailed figures, and now touched with mysterious light the spectral forms upon the wall, they seemed to bind together even the incongruities of the scene, and confer upon the whole a kind of unity of character which made the knight hold his breath for awe.

The stillness of the assembly continued unbroken for several minutes; but by degrees some symptoms of impatience manifested themselves. Here a hoarse sound from the throat startled the silence of the room like a blasphemy, and there a foot grated harshly and heavily upon the floor. Two or three of the reclining figures raised themselves up erect, their armour rattling as they moved; others stepped lightly, and, as it were, cautiously, towards the window, endeavouring to look down into the court; and by and bye, one Herculean figure began to pace through the hall, his armed tread increasing gradually in force and rapidity, till the noise shook the vaults. All were now astir. Impatient mutterings and angry maledictions were heard rumbling in every casque; the iron-clad figures approached nearer and nearer to each other; and the gigantic warrior, halting suddenly in the midst, and glaring round upon the group, as if he would read their physiognomies through their helmet-bars, addressed them in a fierce and disdainful voice.

"By the holy mother of God!" said he, "one would think we were a company of truant boys, about to conspire, if we could muster courage enough, to rob an orchard by moonlight! Are we so unused in Brittany to execute either right or wrong by the strong arm?—or do we doubt, that on the present occasion we are upheld by the laws of the country, and the privileges of our rank? When, only a few years ago, as I may say, we rescued John V. from the dungeons of the Penthievres, and set him firmly on his throne, it was that he might preserve order in the country, not at his own will, but as the president of the nobles. We gave him no charter, to add to his domain the estates of his vassals, and cripple the body of the nobility, by lopping off its fairest and strongest limbs. For what do we wait? It appears to me that this subordinate agent whom we employ binds us all, as with a spell; since we cannot commence even our deliberations without his sanction. Hitherto we have ascertained one another's sentiments at second hand. We have now met to de-

liver them face to face; and since the emissary has not made his appearance at the appointed time, I see no reason why we should not proceed without him. Away with this mystery, which can serve no purpose, but to harbour and conceal treason. Here for one is a face—if you can see it by this corpse-candle of a moon—which was never hidden before, either from friend or foe; and I give all who are short-sighted to wit, that it stands on the shoulders of Claude Montrichard!" The grim warrior raised his vizor as he spoke, and was cheered by most of the company, all of whom followed his example.

"Be it understood," said one, who was slower than the others, "that I am here, by appointment, to receive information on a point nearly touching the peace of Brittany; and not to enter into a cabal, without knowing why or wherefore. Who, I demand, is the leader in this affair? By whose summons are we here? Your name, Claude Montrichard, was mentioned to me by the messenger, and yet you seem to know no more of the matter than the rest of us!"

"By St. Brieuc!" said Montrichard, "it was your name that was mentioned to me; and, knowing your caution, I believed the envoy the rather that it came only in a hint."

"What matters it?" cried a brawny, thickset man, in a strong German accent, "what matters it by whom invited, so that we *are* here? It seems to me that you have as pretty a cause of quarrel before you as could be desired, if you will only let it alone; and as for waiting for more information, all I can say is, that as neither I nor my fifty lances are inclined to eat our horses, we must be up and doing on one side or other, before this moon is many days older."

Loud murmurs now arose among the company, most of whom seemed dismayed at the idea of being so nearly afloat in such an affair, without either pilot or commander.

"Where is the agent?" cried they, tumultuously; "how do we know that he is not doubly a traitor?"

"He is here!" answered a stern and commanding voice; and the Black Knight, making his appearance at the door, strode into the midst of the group.

"Who doubted my honour?" demanded he, looking round.

"That did we all," replied the German.

"And I first," added Montrichard.

"Then you, Claude Montrichard, on fitting time and field, I shall hold responsible. It would be sheer folly to defend

my character otherwise than with my sword. If my face is not uncovered, my actions, so far as you are concerned, are so. I have hitherto told you nothing but what was confirmed afterwards by public report; and if you will not trust me from your own experience of my fidelity, it would be a waste of words to attempt to sway you by reason or argument."

"I accept your defiance," said Montrichard, "were it only to see of what stuff you are made of in the field—you who are so hardy in the closet, and so valiant in the council. But come, let us to business. I seek not to pry into the motives of your actions; and I allow that you have hitherto dealt fairly with us. Now, open your budget!"

"The duke, who seems bent upon humbling the whole of the nobility in the person of Laval, is still determined to take advantage of the madness of the lord de Retz. Roger de Bricqueville, and other friends of this house, are working strenuously upon the mind of their infatuated friend; but the probability is, that all will be in vain, and that in a little while the fairest portion of his estates, St. Etienne de Malmont, will be in the grasp of John V. You will receive intelligence from me the moment this is decided upon; which will justify *any* measures you may take, in the eyes of the whole country. I advise that it should be the signal for action."

"Then we are still to rest upon our arms?" said the German, sullenly; "you told me that at this meeting something was to be done as well as said."

"I propose that the damsel of Laval, who is now journeying to La Verrière, should be seized, and detained in all honour, as a hostage."

"That, sir knight," said Montrichard, "would be to commence the struggle at once."

"It would, if done by brute force: but my plan is this. I have friends within the fortress where she lodges to-night, who will open the wicket when I command. Fall suddenly upon the garrison before to-morrow's dawn, upon pretext of delivering the damsel from the hands of those whom sure information leads you to know are her enemies. Her, in the meantime, will I persuade to take to flight in the midst of the bustle, and by an avenue only known to myself. You will charge her friends with the abduction; they will charge you; time will be lost in recriminations; and messengers must go and come between this and La Verrière. Before the true

nature of the affair is discovered, the question will be decided, peace or war? and according to the answer, I shall cause the damsel to be delivered up either to her father, or to him who may be looked upon as the chief of the insurgent nobles."

Had the ambushed knight been struck with less amazement by the prodigious audacity of this proposal, he must have betrayed himself; but as it was, his faculties, both mental and corporeal, appeared to be paralyzed, and he stood breathless and motionless. Nor did the rest of the audience appear to be less capable of feeling the sublime of impudence; for the speech was followed by profound silence. At length, some appeared to recollect themselves; and, withdrawing, as if unwillingly, from the speculations of individual advantage in which they were plunged, cried out—"He is a stranger! The plan is good—but what security have we that he will render up his prize?" They then began to talk eagerly to one another, separating into small committees.

The Black Knight, in the meantime, took advantage of the temporary confusion to glide from one to another; here interposing a word in the dispute, and there whispering something in the ear of an individual. The nature of these secret communications Douglas learnt from a broken sentence which he heard addressed to Montrichard, who happened at the moment to stand near his loop-hole.

"Support me, if you be not mad—the girl will be ostensibly in my hands, but really in yours—a word to the wise—hush!" By this time, our adventurer had determined, at any personal hazard, to burst into the midst of the conclave; and he only waited for some still better opportunity of detecting and confounding the machinations of the Black Knight. The conspirators, secretly swayed by their own personal feelings or policy, had evidently reasoned one another into a general approval of the proposed plan; although they continued to debate fiercely and tumultuously about the details:—willing, as it appeared, to throw the whole onus upon the Black Knight, yet anxious to repose in him as little confidence as possible.

But a new turn was given to the discussion by a speaker whose voice had not been heard before. This, as well as Douglas could discover in the imperfect light, was a young and handsome man, who even while raising his vizor like the others, had continued to lean against the pillar, and to gaze in half listless, half haughty silence upon the throng.

"Gentlemen," said he, in one of those low, quiet, distinct voices, which the ear turns from louder tones to listen to—"I at length gather something from your debate which is needful for me to understand. I hear on all sides, as the sole objection to the plan, as described by its proposer—'He is a stranger in Brittany!' Now if this means that a foreigner is not eligible to pretend to the hand of the Damsel of Laval—the *real* prize, notwithstanding all your attempts to conceal it, for which we contend—I, for one, shall have nothing to do with the enterprise. I have not seen the lady, it is true, but I like her dowry—a thing which does wonders in reconciling us in matters of taste; and I fancy a branch of the Beauchamps of England, transplanted into this soil, would hardly be overtopped by the fairest oaks of Brittany.

"Methinks," messire, "replied the Black Knight, with a slight expression of impatience, "you are somewhat premature. The question before us is not how to match the damsel of Laval; but how to deliver her from the extravagant pride of her father, and thus place her, as the object of honourable contention, before you all."

"So far, so well," said the Englishman, "we have all, therefore, an equal stake in the safety of the damsel, and her honourable treatment; and why her fate should be committed to the hands of one man, and that one man the least known of us all, I am at a loss to conceive. You appear to entertain a very friendly solicitude, that we should not commit ourselves before the proper time; and, doubtless, we are all very much beholden to you; but still, if we choose to take any portion of risk upon ourselves, you will naturally feel happy in being relieved from so heavy a responsibility. I propose accordingly, that the abduction—or deliverance, as you, Sir Black Knight, more happily phrase it—of the Damsel of Laval, be conducted by a force, composed of an equal number of men contributed by all of us who desire it; the said force to be under your command, with such restrictions as the wisdom of the present meeting may prescribe."

This proposal was received with a shout of approbation; and, when the Black Knight attempted, as before, to address himself to individuals, his voice was drowned in the general uproar. At length all was silent, and every face was directed towards him in expectation. When at length he spoke, and this was not for some time, it was in a cold, haughty, and indiffer-ent tone.

"It was my desire to serve you," said he, "and, if the detention of the Damsel were essentially necessary to our ultimate success, I would do so still. Her being allowed, however, to fall once more into the hands of her father, will, at the worst, only render her deliverance more tedious and difficult; and I decline submitting, in order to avoid this, to the new insult which the wisdom of the meeting has thought proper to offer me. In furtherance of my own plans, notwithstanding, I shall still pursue the adventure as zealously as heretofore. It is myself I serve, not you; and, for my own sake, not yours, will I give you due tidings of the event which must bring you to a decision either to submit or resist. In the meantime, only advising you to take no step whatever till you hear farther from me, I leave you in the holy keeping of your own wits," and so saying the knight strode out of the room.

Douglas would instantly have withdrawn for the purpose of following his mysterious enemy; although, even then, in some doubt as to the possibility of his seizing a man who appeared to have the faculty of vanishing like a spirit. He was detained for a moment, however, by some expressions he heard amidst the tumult occasioned by the haughty exit of the stranger, which raised powerfully his curiosity.

"Follow him not," said the more cautious personage, whose name had not transpired, "and take no heed of his disrespect. Draw near, and I will tell you why. Closer, for I will not trust my voice to the echoes even of this deserted room." Douglas stretched his head forth out of the opening, and listened with soul and sense to the whisper of the old man, but without being able to catch an intelligible word. At the moment he fancied he heard something stir near him; and putting out his hand, he felt that a man in armour stood close by his side.

"Sir," whispered he, "you are here on espial as well as I: move not; or I drag you into the hall. When they are gone, you and I go hand and hand into the moonlight?" and seizing the hand beside him, he grasped it like one who would give earnest of his power to enforce any threat of the kind. The stranger, on his part, did not answer in words, but returned the pressure with such goodwill, that Douglas heard the steel splints of his gauntlet crackle, and felt the blood spring from beneath his finger nails. They stood in this cordial attitude for some minutes, without overhearing a

syllable that could have been of interest to either: and at length the meeting broke up without coming to any conclusion, and they saw the last of its members disappear at the door.

"And now, Sir Black Knight," said Douglas, "for I know you by instinct, even in the dark, you will either settle with me in the court beneath, certain accounts that have been long outstanding between us, or you will accompany me on the instant to yonder fortress, where lodge Orosmandel and the Damsel of Laval. Choose!"

"I should prefer the former alternative," said the stranger, "if I did not perceive by the hardness of your gripe that it would take more minutes than I can well spare just at present to chastise your folly. We shall go, therefore, to the fortress, and the rather, that I have still more pressing business there than you." Groping their way to the secret door, which was the readiest egress, they commenced their descent, still hand in hand; but the narrowness of the rude staircase making this attitude impossible longer, Douglas gave precedence to his enemy, keeping close behind him, so that he might reach the bottom at the same moment.

He reached the bottom alone!

"Who passed?" cried the knight, drawing his sword, "tell me on your lives!"

"Who passed?" repeated the seneschal, in evident surprise. "Why the twelve men, to be sure, not five minutes ago. And what makest thou, sir knight, by the secret stair, and head, instead of heels, foremost?"

"It is glamour! or I am in a dream! and these be no living men, but shadows and phantasms! Open the door, ye unholy shapes, and then sink in the ground and disappear!"

"The thirteenth man!" mused the seneschal, as his valet slowly obeyed; "What thinkest thou of this, comrade?"

"That we are even well rid of him!" replied old Raoul sulkily; "New times are not like old times; and a man now-a-days can laugh at his very doom. Death itself seems to be dead; or wherefore are you and I here? Ah! what a night we should have made of it! with old rhymes, and old stories, and the corpse-streaked east and west between us!"

Douglas escaped as quickly as he could from the ill-boding voices of the old men; and when he had cleared the precincts of the castle, rushed, rather than ran, down the steep on which it stood. While passing the hut by the roadside, he threw a

glance at the door; but all was still. Soon after, he reached the opening by which his friend and he had left the highway; and in a few minutes more, he stood by the side of David Armstrong, who was still fast asleep.

Although the dawn was not yet perceptible, Douglas knew, by the appearance of the sky, and the position of the moon, that it was no longer night; and he laid himself quickly down, determined, in the midst of all his dilemmas, to snatch an hour's rest, before the daylight should call him to its business and adventure. Sleep came at his bidding, but not rest. Long he tumbled, and tossed, and groaned. He imagined at length that he was actually laid out as a corpse, with the seneschal watching at his head, and old Raoul at his feet. The Black Knight presently entered upon the scene; and stooping down, endeavoured to cut the fastenings of his helmet with his misericorde. Unable to stir hand or foot, he felt those diabolical fingers fumbling at his throat; and, overpowered with horror, the sleeper shrieked, and awoke.

His dream was partly true; and he caught hold of the intruding hand with convulsive energy.

"Villain!" he cried, "let me up! Give me a chance of life; and let me die by fair fighting!"

"Get up, then, in the name of God!" said David. "It is that I have wanted this half hour; and I have even now been fain to cut your helmet ties, lest you should be strangled."

"O my friend, I have had such a dream!"

"You may well say so, Archibald; for truly you have had a troubled night."

"Why, what in heaven's name do you know of my troubles?"

"More, perchance, than your waking lips could tell me. But the Black Knight has been busy with you since we lay down; and those two lean and wizard spectres, whose ellow-ritch laugh you might well dread to hear."

"David! Was it all a dream? Only convince me of that—but no—it is impossible."

"You have truly passed a troubled night; and, indeed, as I may say, you might as well not have slept at all. But you men of war, whose minds are not so alert as they might be, are unable to struggle with dreams, which are in general a casualty depending upon the state of the body. With such, the stomach carries it over the brain; and your valiant knight lies groaning under the blows of an ideal victor, whom the

poor scholar, disciplined by his watchings, and fastings, and meditations, would throw off like a cumbersome cloak. For mine own part, I awoke every now and then of express purpose to drive away a great black fly, which kept buzzing and buzzing around your head; and once, on raising my eyes, there was a damsel standing beside us—a young woman—”

“The Damsel of Laval!”

“No, the young woman, Hagar; and she told me that she was an Egyptian, and not a—hem!—but, behold! this was a dream.”

“And so was not mine,” said Douglas, starting up, “Not a word! Listen, and then speak;” and he related in a succinct and coherent manner the adventures of the night. During the course of the recital, although David said nothing, he maintained for a considerable time his own private opinion, that it was all a dream; but by degrees the conviction forced itself upon his mind, that the knight had not even been sleep-walking, but broad awake.

“In this country,” said he, after some moment’s meditation, “the great houses were formerly provided, not only with private passages, the doors of which appeared, both to the sight and touch, to form part of the wall, but also with subterranean avenues, extending far out into the country. This is already an antique fashion; and the remains of such contrivances, if skilfully used, might give an appearance of the supernatural to feats of mere dexterity and ingenuity. If the Black Knight be a creature of flesh and blood, you may be assured, that out of some such substantial materials arose the *glamour* of to-night. At all events, if I am not far mistaken, we shall become better acquainted with magic as we get on; and so, let us up and away, for the sun is already high in the heavens. The time may soon come—*ad sit modo dexter Apollo*—when we shall teach him, in turn, a few of the tricks of the north!”

CHAPTER XI.

THE conspiracy of the relations of Gilles de Retz, which disturbed the latter part of the reign of John V., was in all

probability, as the English knight Beauchamp had hinted, entered into more from personal than public motives. Or rather, it may be considered as one of the last throes of a convulsion which had continued for numerous centuries. The patient had been bled and blistered almost *ad deliquium animi*, and the disease could no longer pamper itself on the rebellious juices of the body ; but still, a sudden heave now and then demonstrated, that although subdued it was not yet expelled. Like the devils of Scripture, when adjured by a stronger power, it would rend the victim once more, before leaving him for ever.

However this may be, the conspirators who, during the night, had held grave debate on the question, as to whether they should seize and carry off a prisoner, the Damsel of Laval, vied with each other in the morning for the distinction of being the most respectful and devoted of her satellites. The air was cool, yet balmy ; their road lay among swelling hills, covered with vines and fruit-trees ; and, instead of the hazy moonlight which, but a few hours before, had wrapped the world, as if with a winding-sheet, a joyous sun looked down upon their line of march, and glittered along the course of the beautiful Loire, till it was lost in the distance.

In addition to the two hundred men-at-arms who escorted the Damsel, there were several of the gentlemen whom Douglas had seen the night before in the ruined hall, with a body of their retainers corresponding to the rank of the individual.

These armed retinues followed the main body, while their commanders rode in front near the litter of Mademoiselle de Laval ; and as, one by one, on arriving at the avenues which led to their own châteaux, they detached themselves from the mass, it was not uninteresting to see the whole line halt during the ceremony of leave-taking, and to watch the glittering of their armour, and the dancing of their plumes, as they spurred haughtily along the wooded paths, and at length disappeared among the trees. Sometimes, when the château was near, its lord prevailed upon the principal travellers to ride up to the gate, and drink a cup of wine without dismounting, and on such occasions the ladies of the family came out to salute the Damsel as she passed. All these incidents contributed, and had done so from the first, to render the progress of the cavalcade extremely slow ; for in reality, a vigorous traveller, even without the assistance of his horse, might have performed the distance from Angers to Nantes in two days.

There was one thing, however, which gave a very peculiar character to the procession, as it might be called. This was the absence, even in well-peopled districts, of that noisy crowd which usually fawns upon the progress of the great. The peasants got out of the way altogether, or else stood still, either gazing on the show in absolute silence, or with their eyes fixed upon the ground. All, however, had their heads uncovered, and their bodies bent. Groups of meaner travellers, instead of attaching themselves, for protection, to the great body, melted away as it approached, and disappeared among the trees; and thus the procession, instead of uniting to itself, as usual, every body whom leisure permitted or business required to travel the same way, rolled silently along, the uniformity of its march only broken by such incidents as we have mentioned.

Among the chiefs who surrounded the litter, although at as great a distance as the breadth of the road permitted, the most conspicuous was Roger de Briqueville, a relation of the family of Laval, and in some sort, a dependant upon his kinsman, the lord de Retz. To him was intrusted, on this occasion, the command of the men-at-arms; but his ordinary office was that of captain of the body-guard of his master. He was low in stature, square built, and long-armed; and his coarse, weather-beaten, pock-pitted face, without a single gleam of what is properly termed intellect, disclosed notwithstanding the keenness of a practised soldier, and the instinctive fidelity of a mastiff dog.

Close by the litter rode Orosmandel, a man whose extraordinary dignity of deportment awed the rude soldiers around him, as much as the benignity of his countenance interested them. To look at him behind, you would have supposed that he was some sovereign prince, of that by-gone time when the attributes of royalty were not merely its crown and sceptre, but grace, majesty, personal strength, and beauty of manly form. In front, his beard, as white as the driven snow, his calm deep eyes, his pale face, moulded by habit into an expression of lofty contemplation, mingled both with sweetness and sadness, gave the idea at once of an apostle and a philosopher; and few travellers there were who looked upon him, who did not step aside out of his path, and hold their breath while he passed by.

His benign expression, however, had not the usual effect of leading on to familiarity and confidence. The persons on

his side of the litter sat their horses with an air of constraint ; they gave him, as the sailors say, a wide berth ; and when they conversed at all with each other, it was in a whisper.

Behind the litter, was Hagar, mounted on a mule, her hood drawn over her face, and her whole form enveloped in her cloak. From time to time, she quickened her pace, to reply to the questions of the Damsel, who, in the absence of other female society, than that of her waiting-woman, desired occasionally to converse with the stranger. Hitherto they had hardly exchanged words, except at the moment when the Jewess presented the note from Sir Archibald Douglas ; but at this point of the journey, when they might be said to be almost in the heart of Gilles de Retz's personal domain, all the chiefs who had joined the procession on the route, had taken their leave, and mademoiselle de Laval had time to think of her protégée.

"Tell me, maiden," said she, "you whose dark eyes speak of warmer suns than ours, what is your parentage and country ?"

"My father, lady, is a merchant from the east, who liveth by trafficking in goods and monies ; and for me, I have no country, being as one born in the desert, and by the way-side."

"Poor girl ! and you know not even the land wherein you saw the light ! Speak, is your father wealthy ?"

"Of a merchant it cannot be said, He is wealthy ; for his substance is always in peril. Nevertheless the Lord hath dealt bountifully with our house, and we have wherewithal to live."

"Is he in Paris ?"

"Nay."

"Then with whom didst thou part ?" interposed Orosmandel, fixing his penetrating eye upon her. "I can read the signs of the human affections, and I know what belongeth to love, and what to kindred."

Hagar stood silent, and interdicted ; for she had not lied boldly, like one who would save her father at the expense of a harmless falsehood ; but had cheated her conscience with the quibble contained in her words : for the Jew was not *in* Paris, but *under* it.

"To whom go you at Nantes ?" demanded Paulin good-naturedly, in order to screen the young woman's confusion.

"To the kinsfolk of our house, who are also traffickers like my father."

"And the knight," added Pauline, in a lower tone, after glancing furtively at Orosmandel, who had relapsed into his usual abstraction,—“he whose missive you delivered to me—how did you—” She coloured deeply while she spoke, and then added, with an effort at indifference, “Have you known him long?”

“I never saw him before that night,” replied Hagar.

“Indeed! And where did you see him then? You were, no doubt, strongly recommended.”

“I was—I met him at a hostelry called the Pomme-du-Pin.” There was a peculiarity in Hagar’s voice while she spoke, which induced the Damsel to look up at her face, which was partly concealed by her hood; and she saw that her usually colourless complexion was suffused with a bright glow. Pauline was silent for some moments.

“Did you say by whom you were recommended?” said she at last carelessly.

“By an intimate friend and blood-relation of the knight.”

“Minion!” said the Damsel suddenly, and in a tone of haughty displeasure; he has nor friend nor kinsman in the whole realm of France.”

“Of a surety, madam, I have spoken the truth; and the meeting was appointed by the knight himself.” Having so spoken, Hagar suffered her mule to fall gradually behind; aware she had given offence, she could not conceive of what nature, to her powerful protectress; yet desirous of discontinuing, at all risks, a conversation which might tend to the discovery of more of her affairs than might be consistent with her father’s safety.

The cavalcade at length reached a side path, which, diverging from the great highway to Nantes, led across the country to La Verrière, the residence of the lord de Reitz. This was not their route, however, for it was intended to go straight on to the city; and Pauline, after pausing for a moment to gaze up the avenue, and to whisper a prayer before a crucifix which marked its entrance, directed her litter to proceed. But Orosmandel stood still; and she paused again out of respect. No one would presume to pass the philosopher, who appeared to be plunged in the deepest abstraction; and thus a silent and unbidden halt took place along the whole line.

A peasant woman was kneeling at the foot of the crucifix,

completely wrapped in her cloak, and apparently absorbed in religious meditation; but the caution or timidity, whichever it might be, that had seemed to affect the whole of her class, was lost in curiosity when the procession stopped, and she turned her head to see what was the matter. She proved to be the same young woman who had given the warning to Sir Archibald Douglas; and the Damsel, observing her, made a sign that she should approach when she had finished her devotions.

"How is it with you, Marie?" said she, in a low voice; "Are you quite recovered?"

"Yes, madam: thanks to your ladyship, St. Julian, and the Holy Virgin."

"Where have you been?"

"To see a relation of my late uncle."

"And you are now going back to your village?"

"Yes, madam; to be married, if you please."

"You met with no mishaps or adventures this time I hope," said the Damsel, smiling, as she put a piece of money into the girl's hand, and waved an adieu.

"Yes, madam," replied Marie, taking care that no one else should hear, yet avoiding any look or tone of significance; "I fell in with a knight under unusual circumstances, with a bloody heart emblazoned on his coat of arms."

"Under what circumstances?" demanded Pauline quickly.

"A report had got abroad among the peasants that you were in danger. The knight perilled his life, on a desperate chance, to find out the truth; and I have not seen or heard of him since."

At this moment, Orosmandel, awaking from his reverie, commanded De Briquerville to take the path to La Verrière.

"To La Verrière!" repeated the latter in surprise, but with submissive respect; "to-morrow, my lord gives a mystery to the people at Nantes, and I understood, from his own letters and your directions, that he would expect us at the hôtel de la Suze."

"He did—he does not," replied the sage mildly, "proceed."

Pauline de Laval, who was by this time much nigh tired of shows and cities, and too well accustomed to Orosmandel even to wonder at his apparently supernatural intelligence, consented readily to the change of route. She was, besides, desirous of obtaining more leisure than Nantes would afford

for those metaphysical meditations which are so important to a girl of seventeen; and, desiring Marie to walk near the litter, so far as her village, the cavalcade was once more in motion.

Hagar, in the meantime, in whose mind the ideas of death and dishonour were inseparably connected with the abode of Prelati, was uncertain for a moment how to act. Her heart impelled her to thank mademoiselle de Laval for her protection, and take open leave; but she remembered the offence she had unconsciously given, and the flash of haughty anger which had lightened for a moment in the Damsel's eyes; and the habitual caution of the oppressed and persecuted—which the oppressors and persecutors term meanness of spirit—prevailed. Amidst the confusion of turning into so narrow a path, she suffered her mule to fall behind, edging herself gradually out of the mass, and hoping that, if once clear of the leaders of the cavalcade, the others would conclude that she had permission to pursue her own way.

In this manner she found herself at length completely extricated from the line; and switching her mule with good will, she rode as quickly along the highway as she could venture to do without running a risk of exciting suspicion. Having gained a certain short distance, she could not resist a desire which beset her to look round; and, turning her head, as if by fascination, she saw Sir Roger de Briqueville standing in his stirrups, and looking after her. The knight waved his hand for her to return; and she was near enough to observe a grim smile upon his countenance. Hagar at first, without stopping, merely pointed along the road, as if to say that Nantes was her destination; but a more impatient gesture from Briqueville convinced her that he was in earnest, and with a quaking heart, she rode back.

"Sir Knight," said she, "the term of my journey is not La Verrière, but the city Nantes; and I pray thee humbly, that thou wilt accept of the thanks of thy handmaid, and convey them also to the Damsel of Laval, for the protection vouchsafed to me thus far."

"La Verrière is your road to Nantes," replied the knight gruffly, "come, come," as he saw she hesitated, "if you affect so much state, we must have a groom to lead your mule by the bridle." Hagar instantly rode up to the litter.

"Damsel," said she, dismounting, "I return thee my humble thanks for the protection thou hast vouchsafed to me

thus far; and I now crave permission to proceed direct, even to the city Nantes."

"I have had occasion to question your veracity," replied the Damsel, severely, but in a low tone; "Did you mean to prove it by absconding stealthily from my protection?"

"Madam," said Hagar in desperation, "thou didst ask of my kindred and my country. Behold, I am a Jewess, even a dweller in the wilderness! Let me pass on in peace; for there can be no communion betwixt thee and me."

"How! a Jewess! This is indeed surprising! A Jewess gives rendezvous to a man in a public tavern; and he—a kinsman of the princely house of Douglas, and a Christian knight—immediately upon making her acquaintance under these circumstances, craves my friendship in her behalf! Do you know her, De Briqueville?"

"I only know that she must go with us to La Verrière; and upon business more serious, I guess, than meeting a gallant in a winehouse, Jewess though she be."

"I hate all mysteries, except those in a tale! Will you explain yours, maiden, or pass entirely from my hands? Choose."

"I commit myself to the hands of the Most High!" said Hagar: and with a deep sigh she folded her hands upon her breast, and resumed her journey, following the litter as before. Pauline looked back more than once, as if hesitating; but between the stories of Hagar and Marie, such a conflict had been raised in her breast, that her reason had not fair play. She could not help suspecting her own conduct to be ungenerous; but she quieted her scruples by determining to redeem her word on the following day; and whether Hagar persisted or not in withholding an explanation, to have her delivered in safety and honour to her friends in Nantes.

As for the Jewess, notwithstanding all that had passed, she trusted so much to her skill in physiognomy, that she would cheerfully have confided her safety to the Damsel of Laval; had she not been aware—or at least, if she did not believe—that even her power, and that of her father to boot, would be as nothing against the immutable will of one who was in her judgment the most talented and subtle villain on the face of the earth. She determined to escape, if escape was possible, before entering the inclosures of the château of La Verrière; and for this purpose she awaited with impatience till a halt should take place for refreshment.

At present, in fact, she knew herself to be out of her element, seated on the back of an animal to which she was a stranger, and which she could not manage, and exposed to the gaze of a crowd of men. She had no self-confidence; she felt powerless and awkward; and eagerly did she long for the moment when, placed on her own feet, she might exercise that art which the habits of her life had rendered easy—of “going and coming with no more noise than the shadow on the wall.” The thought did not present itself without associations. The art was not entirely born of persecution and mystery. It had also been cultivated as a means of surprising and interesting the young Scot; and that which at first was an amusement of her girlish fancy, had become at length—though still unconsciously—the business of her woman’s heart. Bitterly did she grieve for the selfish cruelty of her father in devoting David to a danger so imminent. “Well may the heathen despise us,” said she in her heart; “the God of Jacob must first renew our spirit, before he buildeth up again the house of Israel.”

The halt at length took place at the castle of Huguemont, the lord of which claimed kindred with the house of Laval. The Damsel was here under a well-known roof, and in the society of friends; and although the distance was now considerable to La Verrière; as some unfavourable symptoms of a change of weather presented themselves in the sky, it was determined to remain there for the night.

Hagar crossed the drawbridge with a beating heart—which ceased to beat for some moments when she found herself in a court, surrounded by walls so lofty, that hope itself could not soar over them; and when soon after she knew by the clanking of the chains of the bridge, that the only passage for human foot to the external world was withdrawn. De Briquerville looked at her with a sarcastic smile, as he saw her fairly caged; but, controlling himself as it seemed, he said in a tone more respectful than the words,

“We would receive you into the hall, were it possible; but, being an unbeliever, you must eat either above, or with any of the servants who will suffer you.”

“Not so, De Briquerville,” interposed Pauline de Laval, who overheard him, “This young woman, be it known to you, is under my special protection. She will in the meantime eat with the peasant Marie, for whom I have ordered some refreshment, before she passes on to her village; and

ere retiring to rest, I shall see her myself, and give farther instructions respecting her."

Hagar was now shown into a small low-roofed room, which, but for a window, might have seemed nothing more than a recess; and there she remained for some time alone, her thoughts too deeply concentrated to be disturbed by the tumultuous noise of hurrying steps and calling voices which filled the corridor, and, it might have seemed, the whole castle. Every chance of escape depended upon the character of Marie; and when at length this young woman entered the room, bearing the refreshments in her hand which the domestics were either too busy or too proud to serve, she gazed in her face with a look of such intense scrutiny as to excite the girl's surprise.

"Perhaps you wonder at my waiting upon a Jewess?" said Marie at last; but the blessed St. Julian bestows upon travellers what company he pleases; and moreover, we do not find that the good Samaritan inquired into the belief of the wounded man before he relieved him. Eat and drink, therefore, you who are weary and desolate by the wayside, and stricken, God help us! even while yet a girl, by the troubles of the world."

"I knew it," said Hagar, almost aloud; "I saw it in her eye. She hath neither the stupid brutality of a peasant, nor the ignorant pride of a noble. The God of our fathers be praised!" She then, after grateful thanks, "brake bread" with her, and, having fortified her trembling heart with a mouthful of wine, spoke thus:

"Thou hast truly said, that I am weary and desolate, and stricken with sorrow! I am even as a bird, chased into the net of the fowler; and I have no hope save in the great God of Jew and Gentile—and in thee! Start not: although well-nurtured, and taught beyond thy rank, I know that thou art yet an unregarded peasant; and for that very reason thou canst save me."

"From what, in the name of God? And in what manner? You are no prisoner;" for Marie had not heard what was said by De Briquerville—"and the Damsel of Laval, with her own lips, gave me strict charge to treat you well. If you are oppressed, it is to her you must address yourself; for she is mistress even here, where her father does not command."

"Were it in the power of the Damsel of Laval to protect

me, I would confide in her even as in a good angel ; but, if once within the precincts of La Verrière, I am lost."

"You are indeed fair," said Marie, thinking that at last she understood her ; "you are passing fair ; but you will be under the charge of his own daughter, and above all, you are a Jewess. Still it is said," and she sunk her voice to a whisper, "It is said, that Gilles de Retz is not scrupulous ; and wilder stories are told of the deeds in La Verrière than ever entered into the brain of a fablier."

"What stories?" demanded Hagar.

"Fables, doubtless. Screams have been heard in the midnight wood ; and corpse-lights seen glimmering among the trees. Individuals belonging to the establishment at the castle have suddenly disappeared ; and the skiff of more than one fisherman, returning at night, has run against a corpse floating in the sluggish Erdre. The Damsel of Laval has not been there since she was a child ; and that is nothing to the credit of La Verrière."

After the girl had finished, Hagar sat looking at her for some time, in silent dismay ; her thoughts, however, not altogether occupied with her own danger. She at length took a purse from her girdle, and, putting it into Marie's hand, which she pressed convulsively within both hers :

"Wilt thou aid me to escape?" said she. The girl calmly rejected the bribe, and then moved her seat away ; partly offended by the offer, and partly as feeling the degradation of having been touched so familiarly by a Jewess.

"I cannot," she replied, somewhat more coldly than before, "I dare not even hint at your danger, to the Damsel of Laval."

"I ask it not," said Hagar, eagerly, "but we are alike in stature ; take thou my cloak, and give me thine, and I will go forth in thy semblance. Take also this under robe," for she saw the girl's eye glisten as if in admiration of its richness and elegance, "it will be a wedding garment—nay, let me throw it on thy shoulders. There ; it becometh thee well, for it is only the free and the happy for whom such raiment is fitting. And it shall come to pass that when thou wearest it, thou shalt think of her whom thou didst preserve ; and behold ! thy face at that moment shall look more lovely in the eyes of thine husband, than if there were enwoven in the silk a talisman framed by the art of the magician."

Marie was generous and high-minded ; but she had a touch

of woman's vanity as well as woman's pity, and it was with a sigh she rejected the robe.

"I consent to exchange cloaks," said she; "the Damsel will think me ungrateful, but the time may come when she will find out her mistake; and, if it never does, I shall know that she is mistaken myself." She would then have taken off the robe; but Hagar suddenly threw her cloak above it, and enveloped her in its voluminous folds. She then wrapped herself in the cloak of the peasant girl.

"Tell me," said she, "what is the risk which thou runnest?"

"The risk of appearing ungrateful. You will probably pass in this disguise; and I shall only have to wait for a change of guard; for as my face is known, I can pass in any dress."

"But if the damsel should call for me before a change of guard?"

"Take no thought of that, when my determination is taken, I can dare as well as you. Turn to the left when you pass the gate, and walk on with what speed you may, till nightfall. You will then, since you have money in your purse, find lodgings for the night, in the nearest cottage, and a guide to Nantes by daybreak. Adieu!" Hagar, who was but little accustomed to kindness, could not speak for the swelling of her heart. She stooped down, and kissed the peasant's hand. Marie hesitated for a moment; but then, putting her arm round the waist of her protegee, she kissed the Jewess on the brow. And so they parted.

CHAPTER XII.

HAGAR, unencumbered by her mule, and in the disguise of a peasant, had little difficulty in escaping from the castle; more especially as she found few of the guards completely sober, except the individual whose duty it was to turn the key. When she made her appearance at the postern, it had just been opened for the egress of several persons of her own apparent rank; and a hearty buffet which, in the surprise and terror of the moment, she presented to one of the

soldiers who attempted to salute her, not only kept up the character she personated, but afforded her an excuse for gliding suddenly past the gate-keeper, without waiting for the usual examination.

"Who goes there!" cried the man in surprise: "Comrades, did you see any one pass?—if you are still capable of seeing."

"I saw a shadow," answered one, "gliding along the wall, and then vanishing."

"Shadow!" repeated a soldier, rubbing his ear, "It was flesh and blood—or rather absolute bone—I'll answer for it; and, by the same token, it had the hand and arm of Marie."

"It was the Jewess," said another, "—hiccup!—touching whom we were warned so severely. I knew her by the black eyes—hiccup!—for being seated on this bench—by reason—"

"By reason that you cannot stand."

"Hiccup!—I saw up under her hood. Thou wilt dangle, comrade, from the battlements to-morrow, as surely as these keys dangle to-night at thy girdle." The laugh of derision which followed this speech reached the ears of Hagar, and assured her that she was safe for the present.

She walked, or rather glided on with a rapidity which made her incapable of coherent thought, and for a space of time which she could only guess at by the changes which took place in the sky. When she left the castle, it was a dull, lowering, threatening afternoon; and when she halted, for the first time, the shadows of evening were dissolving, like exorcised spirits, beneath a brilliant and beautiful moon. The Loire, with its massive coteaux and magnificent vistas, was far behind her; and she seemed to have entered another country—but still a land of enchantment, which the imagination disunites from the realities of life, to identify it with its own creations.

The horizon was every where bounded by low, wooded hills, swelling in wild confusion; yet smooth and unbroken, like the waves of the sea subsiding after a storm. In the middle, at the foot of the eminence on which she stood, but still at some distance, lay an immense oblong sheet of water resembling a lake, the waters of which, as tranquil as death, resembled a mass of molten silver, while their level banks were as black as night. A portentous stillness seemed to brood in the air. Not a human habitation was visible. The night-wind, which cools the cheek every where else, was not

admitted here. There was no motion perceptible in nature; except that of the distant shadows of twilight, sinking confusedly in the earth, or disappearing as they fled over the hills.

Hagar looked round in surprise, and growing alarm. But, lonely and outcast as she had been from her birth, it was not of solitude she was afraid, nor of the stillness of nature. There was no lake, she knew, in that part of the country—no waters of any extent, save those of the Erdre; and those dreary banks, dark, solemn, and mysterious, could be none other than the confines of this noiseless, and nearly motionless, river. Marie, in directing her to walk on till nightfall, had calculated her speed by that of other people; and, by this fatal mistake, she was now, no doubt, running straight into the jaws of that danger from which it was worth life and honour to escape.

As soon as this conviction flashed upon the mind of the Jewess, she turned abruptly from the path; and, measuring the country as well as she could with her eye, shaped her course in such a manner as to enable her to continue parallel with the river, without approaching it: the *château* of La Verrière, she knew, standing close to the water's edge. She found it a different thing, however, from gliding along a beaten path, to cut through seemingly interminable woods, and wind around hills and eminences; and when at length she gained an elevated spot clear of trees, she saw that the Erdre was much nearer, and at least suspected a dark formless object on the bank to be the abode of Prelati. Again she made an effort to escape; even retreating so directly from the river, as to leave behind her destination, Nantes, at the same time. All was in vain. A spell seemed to be around her; and when she saw for the third time the stirless waters of the Erdre, she could perceive distinctly that they were dominated by a fortified building.

Hagar sat down upon a stone, quaking in every limb, and looking towards this object without being able for some time to withdraw her eyes from its fascination. She was not much given to superstition; yet the feeling crept upon her mind that she was the victim of magical delusion, that she was at that moment upon enchanted ground! The spot where she rested was a conical eminence, so regular in form as to give the idea of an artificial mound. It was in some places covered with stunted trees and brushwood, with here and there

large mossy stones, similar to the one on which she sat. As Hagar observed this, she got up hastily, and saw that she had been sitting on a tombstone.

She walked on a few steps in trepidation; and then paused abruptly.

"It is a sepulchre," said she, almost aloud, and as if debating with her own thick-coming fancies—"And what then? Is a grave-stone so unfit a resting-place for a daughter of captivity? Will the dead refuse fellowship with one cut off from the living? And will the spirits of the dead arise from their forgotten tombs to say unto me, 'Hence, outcast! begone from us!'" She sat down upon another stone, and burying her face in her hands, prayed silently.

On raising her head again, she was ashamed of the childish terrors which had beset her. Convinced that it was in vain to think of escape by the uncertain light of the moon, she looked about for some shelter which might preserve her from the keen night air; and, so far from disliking the locality to which chance, or fate, had guided her, she now thought that her best chance of safety was with the dead.

"The Christians affirm," said she, "that bad spirits dare not enter within the circle of their holy ground; and, in like manner, a deserted church-yard is no place for the midnight resort of bad men."

She had hitherto been in the moonlight; but on going down the shady side of the eminence, she saw, half hidden by trees, some ruined walls; but of what description the original building had been, it was impossible to tell. From the locality, however, she guessed it to have been a chapel; and this idea was confirmed when, on approaching nearer, she discovered an opening, arched with mouldering stones, and almost choked up with thorns and nettles, which was evidently the entrance to what had once been a burying vault. Here was shelter from the keenness of the night air. Here was refuge from her enemies. Why should she hesitate to take up her abode for a few hours upon such a spot? Was not the whole earth a burying-ground? And was this lonely, silent nook a worse resting-place for the living, because a hundred years ago, or more, it had been a resting-place for the dead.

Hagar, unfastening her cloak, removed her hood from her head, and suffered it to fall back upon her shoulders, that she might stoop more easily; and as her eye rested for a moment

upon her boddice and gown thus disclosed, a sorrowful yet disdainful smile lighted up her features, as with a gleam of moonlight. The garments were highly fantastic in their fashion, and of a stuff so prodigiously rich, that her father had insisted upon her wearing them under her cloak and upper robe (which she had given to Marie,) as the most certain means of preserving them. Her figure at that moment—her strange dress, and the lofty expression of her beautiful, foreign-looking countenance, must have formed altogether a very remarkable picture; especially when taken in conjunction with the scene—a ruin of ruins—a decayed mansion of the dead.

As she stretched forth her hand to put aside the brambles, it may be that some lingering feeling of superstition assailed her; for she stepped hastily back, and retreated several paces. Her heart beat wildly. She stood for some time gazing at the cavern; till, at length, ashamed as well alarmed, she endeavoured by a strong effort to banish the infantine fears which, by deluding and bewildering her imagination, threatened every moment to realize themselves. The thorns and brambles, in fact, which half concealed the vault, began to move. Hagar thought she was fainting, and that this was a symptom, and caught at the ruins beside her for support. But the next moment a human figure appeared at the door of the house of mortality.

She did not scream; she did not move; she did not close her eyes; yet her recollection was gone for some moments. The idea of Prelati filled her mind, and pressed upon her brain. This was all the consciousness she possessed. Every thing else—place, time, circumstance—had vanished.

Even before her outward senses completely returned, her mind was busy preparing its energies to meet so fearful an emergency. She raised her figure to its full height; and, passing her hand before her eyes, as if to drive away the film which obscured them, fixed a look of sedate and collected resolve upon his face. It was not the face of Prelati. A tall man, approaching to middle life, stood before her; his figure concealed by the folds of his cloak, but his dark and lustrous eyes fixed upon hers, with an expression in which wonder struggled with veneration.

"Is it come at last?" said he, his voice quivering with emotion; "Speak! Art thou dust? Art thou a thing of mortal life? Answer, for I will not blench!"

"I am even as thou," replied the Jewess, drawing the hood of her cloak over her head. "Forgive, I pray thee, an intrusion which I could not intend, seeing that I am as one who hasteth on a journey;" and, with a humble reverence, she moved quickly away, yet with sufficient presence of mind to take the direction leading from the castle.

She had not raised her eyes to observe the effect of her words upon the stranger; but on leaving the spot, she had heard a deep expiration, as if of one whose breath had been pent up for some time. She glided on, however, with as much speed as she could exert, without appearing to fly. In that neighbourhood, she thought, all men were dangerous to her, for it was the property of Prelati to bend to his own will the soul of every one within his reach, and to make him an agent and tool of his designs. After some minutes had elapsed, she began to breathe more freely; the country seemed to open; and from the glimpse occasionally afforded, she knew that she had at length broken the spell which confined her feet within the circle of La Verrière.

Her self-gratulations, however, were premature; for by and by she heard the noise of footsteps behind her. She quickened her steps, till, on gaining an open space, she might have seemed to a spectator to skim along the sward; but still her pursuer gained upon her; and in a few minutes more he was by her side.

In vain she quickened, then slackened her pace, he still maintained the same relative position. In the moonlight, his tall shadow mingled with her's; in the dusky grove she could hear him breathe close beside her, when she could hardly discern his figure. She was at length emboldened by her very terror to look up, and she saw with surprise that her companion was buried in a reverie, which appeared to render him wholly unconscious of her presence. This odd and unexpected neglect contributed much to restore the Jewess's self-possession; and at length, as they gained an eminence which suddenly disclosed a view of the public road, and a village close by, she stopped suddenly, and said in a resolute tone,

"Permit me to thank thee humbly for the escort with which thou hast honoured me—I am now almost at home." The stranger started from his reverie at her voice. He looked at her so long and earnestly—examining not only the general character of her face, but each individual feature—that her

eyes at length sunk beneath his. There was nothing, however, which could offend her modesty in the gaze, for there was nothing in its expression which might not have been as applicable to a statue as to a living being.

"You wish me then to leave you?" said he. "What a strange fate is mine, that I should inspire distrust or hatred where I would fain seek confidence. Look at me. I am, perhaps, not an object of admiration, but neither am I calculated to create loathing. Here are we, two denizens of the earth, having met by chance, or destiny, in a lonely spot, sacred to the dead; why should we fly from each other? Why not rather enter into the communings which relieve the heart of its feeling of solitude? We are not enemies by nature, but are of the same species, it may be of the same country. What curse is it that hangs upon the human race, turning them one against the other, as if by instinctive hostility, even when most closely connected by social and natural ties?"

The stranger's words were addressed to Hagar; yet they seemed to flow in soliloquy. She looked at him several times while he spoke; but her eyes sunk under the brightness of his. She saw enough, however, to ascertain that he was singularly handsome, and noble-looking, that his hair was blacker than the raven's wing, and his complexion startlingly pale.

"Why do you not answer?" continued he, after a pause; "I perceive that you understand me; why, then, do you not speak? Is it more a crime to converse with the lips than with the soul?"

"The soul respondeth unconsciously," replied Hagar; "there are many things which place a seal upon the lips. Thou and I are not mere abstractions; and we cannot hold communion as such. Methinks, for a lover of society, and of the intercourse of his kind, yonder ruined vault was a strange resort!"

"I had business there," said the stranger.

"Business!"

"Yes," said he, as he drew from beneath his cloak an infant's skull. "Why start at the sight?" he continued; "Do you dislike to look upon the dead as well as the living? What is there in this to fear?"

"What is there in it to covet?" demanded she. "Why violate the sanctuary of the dead, to possess a thing at once

so useless and so mournful?" A strange smile passed across his face.

"Mournful!" said he: "so is the vault in which it was found; so is the chapel of the vault; so is the hill; so is the soil on which we tread: for all are ruins, and relics, and remembrances of what hath passed away. The earth itself is a vast burying-place, whose mould is composed of the generations it has buried. In a little while this skull will be earth! If it is more mournful now than then, it is only a proof that our soul is the slave of our senses."

"And its use?" said Hagar, wondering at her own desire to prolong so useless a conversation; yet fascinated, not only by the musical tone of the speaker's voice, but by what to her half-informed mind was the novelty of his ideas.

"It is a question that should be answered; and yet, which cannot be answered lightly, or in a breath. The answer would involve a history of myself; a key to my most secret thoughts—to my most lofty aspirations. I think, however, I feel—I know that I should not be silent, if I knew you better. You seem to me as one for whom I have been long looking. There is a spirit, a meaning in your eye, of which you are, perhaps, yourself unconscious, but which my soul, practised in the mysteries of nature, knows how to interpret. I feel as if we had known one another in some former state of existence, and half remembered it in this. Let us be friends; or, if the request be too much for one so recently known, let us become acquainted. I would fain relieve my mind of a load of knowledge which lies upon it like guilt. I have long sought, and sought in vain, the individual in whom the confidence is destined to be placed. If I am not deceived in an art known to few, you are that individual!"

Hagar was not unacquainted with the reveries of the astrologer, the alchemist, the physiognomist, and the other enthusiasts who, at that period, groped in the dark after knowledge; and, perhaps, if this discourse had been addressed to her in her father's laboratory, she would have listened without surprise. Here, however, the scene, the time, the person, threw over it an air of such extravagance, that she could have believed herself to be in a dream; and, for that very reason, it produced the more effect.

"Sir," said she, "a communion like that at which you so darkly hint, could only take place between two minds which had undergone the same preparation. I am not different from

thee in kind; neither is the naked African: but my soul is not as thy soul; I have neither knowledge nor wisdom; and even in rank, we are so far asunder, that men wonder to see us hold converse together." And she drew her peasant's cloak around her, forgetting that the stranger must have seen the gorgeous apparel beneath; and unconscious, that her language, and manner of thinking, were at least those of an instructed person.

"Your soul," said he, "I do not know, I only imagine it; for although it is easy for such as I to guess at the depth from the surface, yet it is only an empirical philosophy which pretends to penetrate to the bottom at a single glance. If you are not she whom I seek, wherefore are you here? Why should we two have been sifted from the mass of mankind, and thrown together at an hour when the rest of the world is asleep, and on a lonely and remote spot, filled with the bones of the forgotten dead?"

"As for rank," and a scornful smile passed over his features, "can you tell me whether this was the skull of a royal infant, or a beggar's brat? What are those distinctions which last but for a few years, and then vanish like a dream? They are as 'nothing, less than nothing, and vanity.' A prince without power and without fortune, is nothing better than a peasant. Were I, at this moment, to array you in the state of a queen—to rear a silken canopy over your head—to place your foot upon marble and gilding—to stretch under your sway a tract of country greater than the eye could measure—would you be any thing less than a queen because you were born in a village?"

"It is in my power to do this—but this is nothing. Vanity has no desire, and pride no object, which is not attainable by us both. If you are she whom I seek, queens will be your handmaidens, and knights and bannerets your slaves. But enough for the present. You lodge, where?"

The Jewess pointed at hazard to the only cottage in the village where there was still a light in the window.

"Do we meet again at the ruined chapel?"

"No—no—no."

"It does not matter. Where?"

"Verily, I am but a passer by, I may not tarry by the way-side."

"What of that?"

"I am journeying towards Nantes."

"Be it so, were it towards Babylon. We meet next at Nantes." And the stranger took her hand, and bowing his head upon it gravely, touched it with his lips; he then turned away without another word, and in a few moments, his graceful figure was lost among the neighbouring trees.*

Hagar was perplexed and astonished; but as we have already hinted, not so much by the enthusiasm of the stranger, which was perfectly in consonance with the spirit of the age, as by the whole adventure, taken with its concomitant circumstances. This singular man was doubtless one of the learned and ingenious persons who occasionally sojourned at the almost regal court of La Verriere. Nay, such was his loftiness of manner and aspect, that she might have supposed him to be the famous Gilles de Retz himself, had she not been aware of the character of the latter. So far from being a contemner of the advantages of rank like the stranger, he was one of the proudest and most ostentatious men of his time. He aped the monarch in state; transacted his business by means of ambassadors; and never stirred out of doors, unless when attended by a body-guard of hundreds of men at arms.

Hagar walked slowly towards the village; and having reached the cottage distinguished by a light in the window, knocked gently at the door. She had heard voices within, and sounds, as if of mirth: but all became silent in an instant. She knocked again; and, putting her ear to the keyhole, could hear whispered consultations as to the propriety of opening.

"Take care what you are about," said one. "It is nearly midnight—and who knows what visitors this unlucky candle may have attracted!"

"But only think, Jehan, if it should be one from the castle—and you know they do not care about hours—"

"Bah! nobody coming from the castle strikes so softly. That was no flesh and blood knock, you may depend upon it. Hush!"

"Good friends," said Hagar, "I am a weary and benighted traveller; and I can pay, in silver money, for a night's lodging."

* A scene similar to this occurs in the author's "Wanderings by the Loire;" to which work the reader is referred for a historical account of Gilles de Retz, and to the drawings by Turner it contains, for an idea of some of the localities of the present story.

"Ay, ay, a traveller, no doubt," repeated Jehan, in his rough but frightened whisper, "going to and fro, as usual."

"Yet it was a sweet, low voice."

"To be sure. Does the wolf howl when he asks the sheep to open? But your honest traveller does not say, 'Open for a piece of silver,' but, 'Open for the love of the Holy Virgin, who hath sent you one!'"

"For all that, I will speak to our bride-cousin; for she can read and write as well as father Bonaventure himself. Hist! Marie?" and some one came apparently from an inner room. "Here is a knock, which Jehan says is not of flesh and blood; but to my thinking, the voice that accompanies it is as sweet as a lute; whereas the Evil One, you know better than we, is likened unto a roaring lion."

Hagar tried the magic of her voice once more, and the door was instantly thrown open.

"Are you come at last?" said the peasant Marie, grasping her hand; "I inquired for you at every house in the village; and, knowing that there was no other shelter, I had begun to dread the worst. Nevertheless, I contrived to persuade my cousin Jehan to sit up for a while, with his sister, on pretence of wishing to talk of some business-matters after my journey with—" A hoarse chuckle from Jehan, and a laugh from the sister, interrupted her.

"What then?" said Marie, severely; "I am to be married the day after to-morrow, and where is the harm? But make haste, cousin, and give the traveller to eat and drink, for it is time we were all in bed."

"Tell me," said Hagar, "was the anger of her of Laval kindled against thee?"

"I did not see the Damsel—the watch was changed before she called for me. Yet I had some difficulty in passing the gate; an absurd story having got among the guard, that I had been already there, beat three of the soldiers black and blue, and rushed out without waiting to answer a question. And all because I can read and write! But come, eat, drink, and to bed. Jehan growls, but will not bite; and both he and his sister are ignorant that you are—not of us. In the morning we shall all go to Nantes together; as a party has been made up, to see a mystery given to the people by the great lord de Retz."

CHAPTER XIII.

AFTER taking some refreshment, Hagar lay down, without undressing, on a pallet spread in a recess, and speedily sunk into a long though troubled sleep. She was awakened by the beams of the sun striking painfully upon her eye-lids; and, on looking up, saw Marie standing by her couch, and gazing at her with a strong expression of wonder and admiration.

"You are a picture," said the latter, "for a limner to draw!—lying on that bed of leaves, in raiment of gold and silver, like a fairy princess—with your hair blacker than midnight, floating in dishevelled tresses over a cheek, which would be like a marble image, but for the dreams that pass across it. Get up, lady, and say your matins (if such be the custom of your people,) and make your toilet quickly; for half the village is waiting for us." Hagar obeyed her humble friend at once; and in less time than the latter would have taken to arrange a single curl of her hair, was ready for the journey. In saying her matins, she turned towards the region of the early sun—looking in vain for that Star which had risen above her head *while she slept*, and which shall never come again till the firmament itself has passed away. Marie stepped back unconsciously, and turned away her head; crossing herself repeatedly, as the unhallowed prayers ascended to heaven.

She advised Hagar to draw her cloak completely round her, so as to conceal the singularity of her dress; and, again bidding her remember that none of the other villagers knew that she was an unbeliever, conducted her out of the house.

"Do not be alarmed," she said, as they walked along, "at the rough speeches of my cousin Jehan; for, although he thinks harm almost always, he rarely does any. I can, at least, insure you a safe journey to Nantes. That is all you require?"

"All, my kindest friend. My kindred dwell in the city, under the protection of the duke, and I may look for my father every day. He will thank thee, both in words and deeds, for his daughter; and believe me, Marie, the old man's blessing will do thee good, and no evil, even though he be of a more ancient faith than thine."

They found about twenty individuals, men, women, boys, and girls, waiting for them at the end of the little village. Among the females there were two or three sufficiently agree-

able faces; but Marie was incomparably superior to all both in beauty and manner. Her intended husband was a tall, handsome, good-humoured looking young man, with but little intellect in his countenance, and nothing about him which seemed "nobler than his fortune." In those days, and in that country, the barriers of rank were almost impassable; and the education which Marie had accidentally received, served no other purpose than occasionally to make her discontented with her lot, and at all times to make her feel as if separate and alone. Her manner towards her betrothed might be termed affectionate; but it was the affection of a sister to a brother—to a younger brother, whom it was her pleasure as well as duty to love and take care of.

Jehan was a sturdy, surly-looking peasant, of some five-and-thirty years of age. His sister, a low-born lass of eighteen, inherited a modification both of the family physiognomy and temper. What was ill-humour in him, however, was in her, at the worst, only a transitory pettishness; and the straightforward coarseness of his mind became refined in the feminine, by the admixture of a little humour and sprightliness, to the sort of acidity usually termed sharpness, or shrewdness.

It was principally with Marie, however, that Hagar conversed, as they walked along; and the former seemed delighted at the opportunity both to speak and listen—for conversation was not the forte of her betrothed. The Jewess endeavoured to extract from her some more tangible information than had been afforded by her hints concerning the doings at La Verrière; but she heard nothing that was pleasing; and indeed, little that was very intelligible. In the following portion of their dialogue is comprehended nearly all to which she possessed any clue.

"You must know," said Marie, "that a certain number of years ago, there came to the castle a philosopher, as he was called, whose name was messire Jean of Poitou. What is the matter? Are you unwell?"

"It was a spasm—it hath passed away."

"He was an unbeliever. He defied God, and worshipped the devil; and when he met the divine Host upon the road, he turned aside, and spat upon the ground. He occupied separate apartments in the castle, where a light was seen in the windows all night; for he possessed, among other wonderful faculties, that of living without sleep. Smoke, and

sometimes flame, issued day and night from the chimney ; and noises were heard ; sometimes as of the rush of waters, and sometimes as of men hammering on an anvil."

"He was, doubtless, an alchemist," said the Jewess.

"He was something worse, as you shall hear. The devil is a dangerous master to serve ; and one day, messire Jean, by some error, either of omission or commission, fell, body and soul, into his power. You may be sure he begged hard for his temporal life ; and at last he gained the boon. The condition was, that every two years he should furnish the fiend with a servant, ready trained and seduced ; whom at the end of the term the Evil One was, if possible, to entrap and destroy. If the victim, however, should contrive to escape, from the horns of the altar, as I may say, messire Jean himself was to take his place, and without hope of further reprieve."

"And dost *thou* believe this wild tale?" said Hagar, scarcely able to repress her indignation.

"After a fashion," replied Marie,— "I do not believe that beasts can speak and reason ; but I believe in the truth conveyed in the fables, which are the tales of philosophers. We of the ignorant have our fables, as well as the learned, although they be not invented from design ; and even in the wildest and most extravagant, there lurks some matter of fact at the bottom, if we could only obtain a clue to it."

"How was the compact fulfilled?" demanded Hagar, indignant no more, but in a low and faltering voice.

"Messire Jean left the castle, and in due time the first substitute came. I remember seeing him myself. He was a young man—tall, pale, and thin ; dark in complexion, and with long black hair falling down upon his shoulders. A bright, red spot burned on either cheek, and his eyes shone so wildly from their deep sockets, that they seemed to shed a preternatural glare over his face. At the end of the two years, he vanished."

"How?" asked the Jewess, in a scarcely audible whisper.

"Doubtless, in sulphureous flames!" replied Marie, smiling bitterly. "That night there was a cry heard in the wood—" She stopped in agitation.

"Was the spot searched? Did he pass away for ever, without leaving a trace—"

"Yea—save a handful of his long black hair upon the ground, dabbled in blood! The second victim—"

"Spare me!"

"You do not love horrors? But this one is soon told; and it finishes the history. He was a youth with light, silky hair, blue eyes that seemed to dance and swim, and a cheek as fair as a girl's—"

"Ismael! Ismael!"

"How! You knew him?"

"It is indeed the portrait," said the Jewess, unable to repress her tears, "of one with whom I played when a child. Go on; for the youth I loved, even as an elder brother, had no portion in the kingdom of darkness."

"At the end of two years he vanished; but without cry, and without blood."

"Then there is hope," said Hagar eagerly, "that he was not—not—"

"There was, for a whole week. But one night the keel of a fisherman's boat struck against something floating on the Erdre. It was the body of the second victim. The third is expected to reach the castle to-morrow."

"How knowest thou that, in the name of God?"

"Because the precise time will then have elapsed which intervened between the disappearance of the first, and the coming of the second victim."

"Tell me—is there any chance of his escape? any possibility of saving him?"

"The lord de Retz might doubtless save him, if he would—but we touch on dangerous ground, and I shall speak no farther."

"Once more, I entreat! If the Evil One hold not state, in bodily presence, at La Verrière, he must have some delegate—some viceroy—"

"Silence! Forbear! I have already said too much—I know not why—Not a word"—for Hagar still attempted to speak—"Not a syllable, or I will have you bound with cords, and carried to the castle."

"It would be the best thing you could do with her," said Jehan, overhearing her last words, "but too wise a thing for you to do, with all your learning. What business had you in the matter? If she was really wanted at La Verrière by those you wot of, it will be the destruction of our whole race."

This sudden and unexpected termination of Marie's disclosures left the Jewess completely bewildered. One thing was certain, however, that David was to be in reality the

third victim, and offered up by her father! A thought of the stranger, and of their promised meeting at Nantes, crossed her mind like a gleam of hope. He had influence, doubtless, with the lord de Retz, and might not she contrive to acquire influence over him? "I will die the death," she mentally exclaimed, if it be needful; but I will save *his* life, and I will save the soul of my father from a mortal sin!"

As the village party approached its destination, they could see the population of the whole surrounding country hurrying towards Nantes as to a common centre. All were dressed in their holiday apparel; and even the sturdy peasant, in his suit of hodden grey, contributed to the picturesque of the scene, having strained the buckle of his belt, upon the same principle on which a beauty endangers her stay-laces, and polished the leaden image stuck in his hat, till it might have been likened to the helmet of a knight, intended at once for ornament and defence. His womankind, in the meantime, trudged after him, vieing with each other in the brilliance both of kerchiefs and complexions; but sometimes the good dame was mounted on horseback, and kept her seat not the less majestically that she rode astride, like a man, as do her descendants of the present day.

Hagar had been but little accustomed to spectacles of popular excitement; and, even in her present anxiety, as they neared the town, where the crowd and hurry redoubled, she felt her colour rise, and her naturally buoyant heart throb with expectation. Every where the people were shutting up their shops and houses; and all business was, for the time, at a stand. Even the itinerant venders of such luxuries as minister to the appetites of a crowd were contented, on this occasion, to assume the character of disinterested spectators; for Gilles de Retz, when he entertained the populace, would brook no interference whatever,—furnishing gratuitously, at his own cost, not only the show, but the refreshments.

They at length reached the grand square, where a temporary stage was erected, with galleries near it for the more distinguished spectators, similar to those that were erected for viewing a contest in the lists. At this place it was the purpose of Hagar to have withdrawn quietly from her companions, and, leaving the square by one of its numerous avenues, to have inquired her way to her kinsman's house. Once fairly upon the scene of the spectacle, however, it was in vain to think of escape. In the midst of that crowd she was like a

straw in a torrent; and had it not been for the protection of the surly Jehan, she must have been trampled under foot. But even his efforts in her favour were so far unlucky, that they awakened the ire of several other peasants, who were alike zealously employed in piloting their womankind; and a kind of scuffle ensued, in which Hagar lost her cloak.

No sooner had this metamorphosis been effected, in which the hooded peasant was converted into a "fairy princess," than a sudden reaction took place, both in the mind and manners of the crowd. Every one believed that, woman though she was, she had something to do in the coming spectacle, or at least that she was in some way connected with its master; and all held back either in respect or terror. Hagar thus found herself at the extreme edge of the living mass, where it was dressed in line to allow the procession of the actors to pass on to the stage; and there she stood, conspicuous and alone, in a wide semicircle formed around her by the populace, her fears completely overpowered by shame and vexation.

A burst of music at length proclaimed that the procession had entered the square, and a shout of welcome arose from the multitude. When this was silent, Hagar, in the midst of all her embarrassment, felt her heart stirred at once with fear and delight by the sound of the clear-toned trumpets, mingling with the swell of numerous large organs. The latter instruments, blazing with gold and silver, were carried on men's shoulders, and belonged to the private chapel of the singular character who presided over the scene.

Immediately after, a company of valets made their appearance, clearing their way by means of batons, which they applied without ceremony to the shins of the crowd. Then came the band of music, and then the priests of the chapel; the latter marshalled by a troop of beautiful boys, walking backwards, and flinging up golden censors, from which the incense came forth in wreaths of smoke. The banners, shrines, reliquaries, crucifixes, and sacred vessels of their religious establishment, were borne aloft by the ecclesiastics, who were all dressed in robes of cloth and gold; and perhaps there was not one of the rich abbeys of France which could have decked forth a pageant more sumptuous and imposing. The necks of the crowd were wearied with bowing, and their hands with making the sign of the cross, as one by one those holy things passed by; but when at length the banner of the

patron saint of the house of Laval made its appearance, the whole multitude sunk upon their knees, at the same moment—all save one.

“Down with thee!” cried Marie. “Down, stranger, if you be not mad as well as impious!” The Jewess crossed her arms tightly upon her bosom, as if she would shrink within herself; but she remained standing erect.

“Is the king of Babylon,” said she to her own quaking heart, “more terrible than the Most High? I put my trust in the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!”

Immediately after the priests came the body-guard, two and two, clad in complete steel, and mounted on superb war-horses. The line extended the whole length of the square; but, close by, a more than usual space intervened, in the midst of which rode a single knight. The crowd did not rise till he had passed by; and, indeed, the homage which they rendered him seemed to be even more devout than that accorded to the saint. Every lip moved with sounds of praise or admiration; but the words came forth muffled, as if they dreaded to offend even by flattery. “Noble—generous—bountiful!” were the whispers that met the ear of Hagar on one side, and “handsome—graceful—gallant!” on the other. At that moment her fears were lost in feminine curiosity; and, bending forward, she watched impatiently to obtain a full view of the famous Gilles de Retz.

The graceful and stately warrior sate with relaxed bridle, as if he left to the fancy of his horse the part they should both play in the procession; and the animal, conscious of the honour, arched his neck with haughtiness, snorting, and tossing his head, while he stepped mincingly on, as if disdaining to touch the ground. The rider, in the meantime, looked occasionally to one side, to acknowledge, with a half-negligent, half-condescending bend, the homage of the people; and it happened, that as he approached the place where Hagar stood, his face was turned away for this purpose. The Jewess felt more annoyed than she would have acknowledged to herself, when she saw him about to pass by before she had obtained a glimpse of his features; but at the instant the bridle was tightened, the steed checked in his career, and the knight, turning full round, fixed his eyes with a brilliant, yet respectful smile of recognition upon her face, while he pulled off his jewelled bonnet, and bent his head even to the horse’s mane.

Hagar was stunned. The scene fled from her eyes; and for a moment, the grand square of Nantes was filled with the lonely church-yard of the Erdre, and its sepulchral ruins. This was he of the burying-vault—the philosophical enthusiast—the contemner of rank and birth—the companion of her midnight wanderings! She was aroused from her stupor by the voice of a page, announcing that the lord de Retz invited her to a seat in the gallery. She would have declined the honour; but a line was already formed for her passage in front, and to retreat through the crowd behind was impossible. In another moment, the Jewess, wondering at all things, and at herself more than all, was seated in a gallery next to that of the family of Laval, and set apart for the magnates of the city.

The priests of the chapel of La Verrière were as expert in the histrionic art as the brothers of the Passion at Paris; and no sooner had the mystery commenced, than the people forgot even the generous master of the spectacle, in enthusiasm and delight. There was one of the actors more especially, who seemed a well-known favourite of the audience. He was a strangely misshapen being, of dwarfish stature, but singularly agile. The features of his face, if taken individually, might have been reckoned even handsome; but by some freaks of nature, or else some mischance which occurred in early childhood, every thing seemed out of place, and the jumble produced was at once ludicrous and horrible. His hands and fingers were strangely long and thin, and, but for their delicacy of colour, would have somewhat resembled those of an ape. His distorted arms and legs seemed to be of bone and muscle, without a particle of flesh; and, cased as he was in the fur of a wild beast, his feet hidden by artificial hoofs, and two twisted horns rising from his ominous brow, no better representation could have been found among the sons of men of the goblin he mimicked.

His voice, although not so full and loud as that of David Armstrong, when he enacted Hashmodai, was capable of making itself heard still farther. Even when coming from a distance, its shrill tones seemed to pierce the air, and quiver in the ear like an arrow. But his almost supernatural agility awakened in a yet higher degree the admiration of the crowd. He leaped about like a being altogether independent of the common laws of motion; vomiting himself up from the jaws of hell, as if he had been nothing more than a puff of

S m
5
W
J
F
J

sooty smoke, and vanishing again instantaneously therein, as if the cavity had possessed neither sides nor bottom.

All went on in dumb show while this strangely gifted actor was on the stage ; for the crowd shouted till they were hoarse, and clapped their hands till their fingers ached. At length, in the very midst of one of his flights across the scene, in which he seemed to have intended to fly at one leap, from side to side, he stopped suddenly, as if transfixed with a lance. In this position, he remained so long, without the slightest living motion, that the voices of the people died away in wonder and expectation, and a profound silence succeeded to the uproar.

By degrees, the fixed eyes of the dwarf began to expand and glare ; his nostrils dilated, his chest rose and fell convulsively ; his limbs writhed and trembled ; and at last, in a voice which made every heart leap, he shrieked, " Master, I come ! " and sprang from the stage among the crowd. For some moments all was confusion and dismay ; but the voice of Gilles de Retz, commanding him to return, was speedily heard above the cries of the affrighted peasants. The seeming goblin at first pursued his way, although more slowly ; but finally he turned round, as if by compulsion, and climbing up the gallery of Laval like an ape, stood upon the cushioned edge, confronting its lord.

" Whither goest thou ? " demanded the lord de Retz.

" Whither I am summoned," was the reply ; and the dwarf writhed in agony while he spoke, and large drops of sweat coursed down his face.

" How knowest thou that thou art summoned ? "

" By a power—by a sign. For mercy's sake allow me to depart ! "

" What sign ? Speak, and go. "

The dwarf turned up the sleeve of his dress, and pointed to his long fleshless arm, from which a stream of blood bubbled forth. He then sprung once more among the crowd, and in an instant disappeared.

From the commencement of the show, Hagar had debated within herself, whether or not she should embrace the opportunity, which would no doubt be offered her at its conclusion, of a conversation with the lord de Retz. This, it seemed, was the meeting to which he had referred on the preceding night ; when it appeared a matter of indifference to him

whether the scene was to be Nantes or Babylon ! There was something so like fatality in the manner in which she had been compelled to keep the rendezvous, that she felt a kind of awe gather upon her mind as she looked upon him. There was nothing, however, in that noble countenance to excite fear ; and when she reflected that he must have been as unconscious as herself of the mode in which they were to be again thrown together, she at length resolved to give herself up to the current of circumstances, and leave the direction of her course to heaven.

But just as she had come to this conclusion, and began to arrange in her mind the terms in which it would be most proper to introduce the subject of David Armstrong, the scream of the dwarf broke upon her ear—"Master, I come !" Hagar, as much startled as the rest of the audience, watched what followed with even more interest than they ; and the connexion which appeared to exist between the seeming goblin and Gilles de Retz shocked and alarmed her. The stories of Marie came back upon her recollection with new force ; and she reflected that such horrors could not have taken place at La Verrière without the knowledge and permission of its lord. Although more than ever resolved to attempt all things, in order to save the *third victim*, she felt it to be her wisest course to parley with the powerful and mysterious baron when under the protection of her kinsmen ; and, at the moment of the greatest agitation, when a thunderbolt might have fallen among the multitude, unnoticed, she glided out of the gallery, and plunged into the crowd.

"If our interview," said she mentally, as she threw a parting glance at Gilles de Retz, whose soul appeared to be absorbed in following the flight of the dwarf—"If our interview be to come of destiny, or enchantment, my efforts to postpone it will be alike harmless and unavailing"—and, assisted by the prestige which seemed to attach itself to her sumptuous apparel, she made her way through the crowd with less difficulty than might have been expected.

Her good fortune so far, however, was owing in part to the same assistance which she had enjoyed during her entrance ; for Jehan, whom she met in the middle of the press, had not yet recovered from his unwonted fit of gallantry.

"And now whither go you, fair mistress ?" demanded he bluntly, when they were clear of the crowd.

"To the abode of Rabbi Solomon, if I can find it. If the place be unknown to thee, as being a man of the fields, I can scarcely do wrong in asking the guidance of the first person I meet; for the Rabbi Solomon, the son of Jacob, is a star in Israel with which the eyes even of the Gentiles are familiar."

"I know the man, and the place," said Jehan.

"Then hesitate not; but let us go swiftly, and a piece of coined money shall testify my gratitude." Jehan led the way, and Hagar followed him, for a time, with more lightness of heart than she had felt for years. Her perilous journey was accomplished. In a few minutes she would be in the midst of friends and kinsmen, powerful alike by their wealth and the favour of the duke. To that circle would be added, in a few days, by the blessing of Jehovah, her father; and from such vantage ground she might parley in safety even with Gilles de Retz. The pecuniary embarrassments of the lord of La Verrière, if these had been described truly by Prelati, would render him still more accessible to her influence; and David Armstrong, loosed from the horns of the altar, would owe his life to her. The dreams of the Jewess extended no farther. "He will be free," said she, "he will be safe, and I shall be—" The word 'happy,' which had risen to her lips, was lost in a deep sigh; and when she raised her eyes to the face of Jehan—for he had stopped, there was in her expression so much of loneliness and desolateness of heart that the rude peasant was troubled.

"Why do you not knock?" said he at last, in a forced gruffness of tone.

"Are we arrived?"

"Yea." The building seemed to be of immense size; but, as was frequently the case in the habitations of the persecuted Jews, the door was small, and entered from a mean and obscure street. Hagar knocked gently, and then turned round to her conductor.

"My friend," said she, "I this day did thee injustice in my thoughts, and I shall henceforth be more distrustful of my own hasty impressions. Accept of this piece of gold as the external token of my thanks; but imagine not that my heart will cease to recollect gratefully what thou hast done for one whom thou must have supposed to be a friendless outcast." Jehan looked greedily at the money for a moment, but he drew back without accepting it.

"I have done nothing," said he, "that I ought to repent.

Nothing!—but yet, had I known that she would have so looked, and spoken, and offered gold, when at most I reckoned upon a small piece of silver—Hold!” for the door had opened, and Hagar was crossing the threshold—“Yet another word—I did mistake—” The Jewess threw the piece of money to him with a smile, thinking that he had repented his generosity. She then went in, and the door shut.

“This is not my doing,” said Jehan, “after staring vacantly for some time at the closed door; “I would have saved her, but she went in of her own free will; and now the affair is between her and the lord de Retz. Few there be who come out of the hôtel de la Suze as they went in! But what is that to me? Yet I will not touch her money; no, not with my finger-end! I have done my duty, and saved my family from the consequences of Marie’s folly: that is reward enough. But is the gold to lie there, perhaps as a trap, and a snare, and a stumbling-block for the next passer by? The saints forbid! I shall carry it straightway to the Hôtel Dieu, and give it to the poor; or rather will I purchase an offering for our altar—Hum! it may be better still to lay it up with my other savings in the green stocking, and wait the Virgin’s pleasure for an opportunity of spending it in some holy purpose!”

CHAPTER XIV.

LEAVING Hagar in the sumptuous city residence of the lord de Retz, called the Hôtel de La Suze, we now turn to certain other personages of our history.

When the Damsel of Laval set forth on that day, on the last short stage of her journey to La Verrière, it was with a spirit full of vague uneasiness. Soon after entering the château of Huguemont, the evening before, she had had time to reflect on her conduct in the matter of the forlorn Jewess, and perhaps formed a true judgment in setting it down both as unjust and ungenerous. That the exodus from Paris of one of the persecuted remnant should be involved in darkness and mystery, was surely nothing more than natural; and the part taken in it by Sir Archibald Douglas, though not yet fully explained,

was obviously consistent with the generosity of his character. The blush of Hagar—the changing of her cheek from one colour to another—this was her sole pretext and justification !

Even giving the fullest possible weight to this phenomenon, what did it indicate ? That the knight was false ? or simply, that the thoughts of a young Hebrew girl, friendless, outcast, and alone, had dwelt somewhat too tenaciously on perhaps the only being upon earth who had ever shown her disinterested kindness ? As for the story of the young knight's "kinsman," of whom she had never heard, this, she thought, might have been a mere mistake ; or else it might have arisen from the ambition of some obscure foreigner in Paris to have it supposed that he was connected with the noble house of Douglas. Pauline could not disguise from herself that her momentary jealousy originated more in a mean pride than womanly passion. Douglas, though noble, was a poor adventurer, while she was one of the richest heiresses in Europe. Does he love me for myself ? was the barbed thought which had entered her soul, or am I merely the star of his ambition, while another is the mistress of his heart ? She now blushed at the paltriness of such a suspicion when applied to her *preux chevalier*, and awaited with impatience the moment when the ceremonies of society would permit her to call the young Jewess to her presence.

Such was her frame of mind when she received tidings of the flight of Hagar.

"Let no one pursue, or molest her," said she, after a moment's pause. "I cannot know," she added, mentally, "how instant may be her business at Nantes ; but be this as it may, to fly from injustice is no proof of guilt."

"Madam," remonstrated De Briqueville, "the night is clear, and she cannot be far distant. My commands to take her to La Verrière are urgent."

"I release you from all responsibility."

"Then let *him* hear that you do so," and he indicated the person to whom he alluded rather by the expression of his eye than by a look to where he stood. "In the concerns of any one else," added he, "I would peril my life to obey you ; and you know, Damsel, I have done so before now." Pauline did not hesitate to grant the request of this faithful adherent of her family ; and going up to the philosopher, she acquainted him with what had taken place, and with her desire that since the young woman had escaped, she should be

permitted to take her own course. The sage paused for an instant.

"Be it so," said he, at length, with an indulgent smile. "It matters not whose course she takes, for all must inevitably tend to the same end. Inert matter must be acted upon by extraneous bodies; but men are the agents of their own destinies." But, notwithstanding this decision, Pauline set out on her journey, as we have said, in little tranquillity of mind. It was Sir Archibald's singleness and purity of heart which had won her love; or, in other words, it was the idea that he was wholly hers; and the thought, (which suggested itself in spite of her struggles) even of one of those transitory infidelities of the senses, rather than the soul, which were in general still less regarded in that age than in ours, was terrible to her imagination. Hagar was a Jewess, indeed, but still a woman; and Pauline hardly exaggerated the truth, when she confessed that she was "fearful fair."

The scene, which the reader has viewed by moonlight, presented a somewhat different character when warmed and illumined by the beams of the morning sun. The same stillness, indeed, the same idea of loneliness and mystery prevailed, which to this day enwraps the Erdre; but the air was cool and invigorating, the leaves glanced and stirred, and the human heart, as usual, bore sympathy with the joy of nature. Pauline herself was not long of yielding to the influences which seemed to rain down from heaven upon the earth.

"Look, father," said she—for by this name she frequently addressed the philosopher,—“would you not think that these trees and shrubs, and yonder hills and waters, were things of life like ourselves? Do you not feel the breath of the flowers, and hear the whisper that runs through the grove? It seems to me as if I were at home; and that I feel, for the first time, as one belonging to the great family of nature!”

"It is a wholesome thought, my daughter," replied Orosmandel, "and more true than thou dost imagine. We are all things of life, from the clod to the worm, from the worm to the angel. All matter is the body of spirit; and to the unequal distribution of the latter is owing the varieties presented by the universe. The flower hath more of spirit than the clod, on whose juices it doth live; the lamb hath more of spirit than the flower which it crops in passing along; and man hath more of spirit than beast, vegetable, or earth, which he changeth or devoureth for his own profit."

"Alas! that nature should thus flourish upon her own harm, and that we of the human race should be the most destructive of her children!"

"Nature, my child, may change, and reproduce, but she destroyeth not. The juices of the clod still live in the body of the flower; the perfume of the flower still sweetens the blood of the lamb; and all things grow in the growth and strengthen in the strength of the general devourer, man."

"But man cannot devour spirit, else would the greatest eater be the greatest wit. Yet the spirit does not die?"

"Neither spirit nor matter dieth. If thou burn this tree to the ground, it is not destroyed, even in its corporeal part. Its substance is merely decomposed by the more subtle body of fire, and returns, in smoke and ashes, to the elements whence it arose. Its spirit, in like manner, is shed abroad over general nature; and that which animated a tree still liveth in the body of the universe."

"But spirit, my father," said Pauline, endeavouring to grasp the ideas which flitted indefinitely through her half-cultivated mind, "has spirit, which is the nobler part, no power over matter? Would the tree, think you, if so animated, remain for ever fixed to the earth?"

"It is the distribution of spirit," replied the philosopher, "to which is owing the inequalities which exist in the scale of being. The meanest worm that crawls, hath more of spiritual essence than the proudest oak; and it is not till we ascend to man, that we find the quantity sufficient to operate a change upon his mortal destinies. Man is indeed lower than they that are called Spirits by way of excellence, and his soul is clogged by its earthly tabernacle; still, he hath that within him, which, if well and boldly used, will make even the demons tremble."

The cheek of the Damsel flushed, and her bosom throbbed, as these words awakened a train of glorious and daring thoughts.

"Would that I were as you," she exclaimed, "O Orosmandel! If to read and fast, and pray—if to outwatch the midnight lamp—if to give up wealth, and health, and youth, and pleasure, and the world's applause, would make me other and higher than I am—cheerfully would the sacrifice be made!"

"I know it," replied the sage, calmly; "Thou couldst not feel otherwise, if thou wouldst; for such lofty, yet vague aspira-

tions, are a portion of the gift of life bestowed upon thee by thy father. The watchings, and fastings, and studies, however, of the master, render the duties of the scholar less arduous. Knowledge may be acquired by communication as well as by search. But enough for the present. At another time we may talk farther."

"And why not now? I fear you mistrust me because of my youth, and because I am a woman; but in aught that Christian hands may dare—in aught that involves offence neither to God nor man"—Orosmandel smiled sarcastically, but observing that she paused, disconcerted by his look, he resumed his usual serious and benignant expression.

"I fear," said he, "that we should differ in our estimate of what doth constitute offence. Even now thou didst blame the flower for drinking the juices of the sod, and the lamb for browsing on the flower, and man himself for decomposing the bodies, and shedding abroad the spirits of his fellow-beings of the earth!"

"Nay, my father, I was hardly serious in this; for without such nourishment, the flower would wither, and man die, and thus a greater evil be produced than the marring of the meaner works of nature. But yet, is there not danger to weak intellects like mine in such a system? If all things are beings gifted alike with life and spirit, where lies the line of distinction between those that are common and those that are sacred?—between those that are given to man for the uses of his body, and those that are fenced round, even from his vengeance, by the interdiction, Thou shalt not kill! I have heard of plants which so nearly approach to animal life that they shriek when wounded, and of wild animals that are capable of being converted, by education, into men. To what scale of being does the dominion of man extend? and where is the limit thereof? Suppose him to overstep the bound, and well may he do so where the line is so indefinite, and slay from some motive, higher and nobler, we shall suppose, than that which arises from the wants of his body, an individual of his own kind and rank in creation—is not this murder?"

"It is the decomposing a more perfect form—the detaching from an individual part, and giving to the universe, a greater portion of divine essence."

"How!" exclaimed the damsel, in indignant surprise.

"It is as I have said," replied Orosmandel calmly, "A

man taketh away vegetable life because he is hungry, and animal life to appease some fouler instinct of his nature. These are crimes, if committed without sufficient motive; for he shall not be held guiltless if he root up the produce of the soil, or slay the meaner animals to no purpose. Reasoning from this analogy, I would say—as a looker-on, however, rather than an actor in the business of life—that a motive *may* exist sufficiently high and urgent to authorize what in the vulgar language you have denominated ‘murder.’ ”

“Great God! and do I hear such doctrine from *your* lips?”

“It is the doctrine,” said he with a smile, “of all schools, and all ages; although thou art as yet too little accustomed to such idle disputation to note the difference between words and things. Men seize upon their neighbours, and convert them into cattle; and the world does not condemn because the skin of the slave is darker in hue than that of his master. The soldier slays his neighbours, and for no better reason than that his prince desires it; the patriot slays his prince in order to avert a tax upon the country; yet neither homicide is called a murderer. I say unto thee that a motive *may* exist which shall render the decomposing of the elemental form, and the shedding of the spirit, whether of man or beast, a work not only innocent but laudable and virtuous!”

Pauline was for some time silent in dismay. The speculations of Orosmandel were often dark and mystical, and she had before now had occasion to wonder at the slight consideration in which he seemed to hold those words and things which blanch the cheek of other men; but till this day, although frequently tending towards it, he had never given her a general glimpse of the theory whence appeared to emanate all that to her was singular in his opinions. Being a woman, she could not hold her tongue for ever, when words had been spoken which sounded like blasphemies to her ear; and too uninformed to expose his fallacies by reasoning, she had recourse, like other ignorant persons, to Scripture.

“Your doctrine of spirits,” said she, “I fear is not only dangerous but damnable: it is opposed to holy writ.”

“On the contrary,” said Orosmandel, “it is based upon Scripture. Every line of the sacred writings inculcates the connexion and integrity of the whole system of the universe; and in the book of the Preacher we find express mention of the souls of beasts.”

"Be it so. Of this I know nothing; but can that doctrine be scriptural in which virtue is founded on mere expedience? Are the eternal and immutable laws of God to be broken at the pleasure, or according to the reason of so fallible a being as man?"

"The divine laws," said Orosmandel, speaking carelessly, as if appearing to tire of controversy with so weak an antagonist, "are neither eternal or immutable. They were promulgated for the benefit, not of God, but of man; and were therefore wisely adapted to the wants and uses of a being whose condition is subjected to perpetual and infinite change. Are they to be set aside, thou demandest, according to the fallible reason of a man? Why this is done every day by pope, cardinal, or bishop,—nay, by the meanest priest that ever heard confession, and absolved the sinner from the consequences of transgression. But even setting aside the practice of the Christian church in our day, which some heretics conceive to be erroneous, we find in every page of Scripture unanswerable evidence of the adaptation of the laws of God to the mutability of human life. To take an extreme case, for the purpose of avoiding any cavilling with regard to the heinousness of the action, the world was peopled at first by the incestuous loves of its inhabitants. This was commanded—this was a law of God. A race, however, which is thus propagated, deteriorates in the course of a few generations, and would probably finish by sinking to the scale of the beasts. The law, therefore, which had been instituted for the good of mankind, was for the good of mankind not only repealed but reversed; and the means alluded to, after its *expedience* had ceased, was declared to be an enormous and deadly sin. But this talk is unprofitable. Thy mind must first be purged of prejudice before it can admit truth. Of this, however, rest assured, that no philosophy can be true which is irreconcilable with Scripture!" and with this wholesome dogma the sage concluded his lesson.

Pauline made no reply. The conversation which she had held with the old man on her present journey, had more confused than enlightened her; and she desired rather to arrange her thoughts than to overburden her mind with new ones. She was glad when the philosopher ceased to speak; and in order to change the current of his ideas, she reminded him of a question she had put on their leaving Huguemont,

as to whether she might expect to meet her father at La Verrière. Orosmandel started as she spoke, and his eyes flashed fire.

"I had forgotten," said he, and he added, between his teeth, in a scarcely audible mutter, "The lagging cur! if he do not howl for this!" and taking a small silver horn from beneath his cloak, he applied it to his lips. Pauline remembered that on asking her question, as they left Huguemont, he had sounded a low note upon this instrument, saying to her, "Anon," as if promising a speedy answer. The blast at present was hardly louder, and yet appeared to vibrate in the air at a great distance. He paused, and looked in the direction of Nantes. Presently some object was seen crossing an open space with the speed of a hare; then the foliage moved nearer the road; and then an uncouth creature, apparently neither man nor beast, darted out of the wood, and sprang at one bound upon the sage's horse, where he sat upon the neck of the animal in the manner of an ape.

At this apparition, Pauline could not repress a scream, and a hoarser cry arose from more than one of the bold bosoms near her. The horses, however, appeared to be still more affected by the intrusion. Some took the bit in their mouths, and fled at full speed; while others, under more, but not better command, plunged and reared as if they would have thrown their riders. Orosmandel alone looked fixedly at the strange figure before him; and his noble steed remained as motionless as if he had been cut out of stone.

"How now, sirrah?" said the philosopher sternly: "Must I call twice?"

"Forgive me, master," replied the dwarf, shaking with terror; "I was detained in answering the questions of him whom thou didst command me to obey; but when once free, I came at thy bidding, even as an arrow cleaveth the air."

Pauline, as well as De Briqueville, and the others near him, had by this time recognized through his goblin dress, a well-known slave—some said a *familiar*—of Orosmandel; and, although their surprise was undiminished, they were able to look without terror on one to whose imp-like form they had been reconciled by habit. The line was speedily redressed, and in utter silence; for none of the whispered intercommunications were heard, to which an unusual or terrifying circumstance gives birth. Each man locked up his

thoughts in his own breast; and many would not trust them with freedom even there, but held them down with *aves* and *credos* for the rest of the journey.

Orosmandel, in the meantime, after having informed the damsel that she should find her father at La Verrière, continued his route unmoved, with the dwarf sitting behind him. Sometimes they conversed, but it was in an unknown tongue. De Briqueville, who had been in the East, thought this language resembled Arabic; but he was never heard to make further remark on the subject, except in thanking God that he did not understand a word of it.

Nothing else worthy of observation occurred till they reached La Verrière. Of this place Pauline had a very indistinct recollection, never having been there since her childhood; and now she no longer wondered that her father should have chosen another domicile for her, or that he himself should have sunk, while inhabiting it, into the melancholy and abstractedness for which he was remarkable.

The château was a dark and sombre fortress seated on the brink of the lifeless Erdre. On the landward side, besides its walls and ditches, it was defended by dark woods and morasses, as intricate of passage as the stronghold of the Cretan monster. On the side of the river all access was cut off, except by a narrow and secret channel, winding through the floating swamps that were called in the language of the district "plains." In summer these were covered with the richest vegetation, so tempting to the eye of cattle, that every year many a strong ox perilled and lost his life in order to gratify his appetite. The ground sunk under his feet while he rioted in the meal; and, in endeavouring to regain the firm earth, it usually happened that he plunged into some treacherous hole, deceived by the grass which coated its surface, and disappeared in a gulf,

"Where never fathom line could touch the ground!"

Pauline, acquainted though she was with Brittany, where at that time almost every gentleman's house was a regular fortress, shivered as she crossed the first drawbridge, and heard the rattle of the chains as it was raised behind her. She was still, however, it might have seemed, in the open country, for her way lay with many a turning and winding, through woods and jungles and morasses, where the earth trembled

beneath their feet. The second gate was, in like manner, passed, and almost the same scene still continued; for the castle which they beheld at a distance, had vanished on their entering the precincts. At length she stood within the courtyard, and saw the heart of all this mystery, with feelings not greatly different from those of the unwilling visitors of the Minotaur after traversing the Labyrinth. It was a huge but low building, of prodigious strength, black with age, half hidden by the fortification termed a curtain, its few windows almost as narrow as loopholes, and the only visible doorway sunk in the earth, like the entrance to a subterranean habitation.

Up to this moment Pauline, who was only too happy to be permitted to see her father anywhere, had indulged in no speculations upon the cause of her present visit. She had received the summons as a boon, and looked forward with girlish delight to the freedom she would enjoy in roaming among the woods of La Verrière, and skimming in some fairy-like bark the placid waters of the Erdre. She now recollected, however, with an uncomfortable but indefinite sensation, that the château, and all things pertaining thereto, had been a forbidden topic at the Hôtel de la Suze; and that her father, so far from giving her an invitation to his habitual country residence, had on more than one occasion silenced her with sternness, and almost violence of manner, when she hinted her desire to visit it.

"What can have produced so sudden a change?" she inquired mentally, as she stooped her head to enter the low vaulted door. "Why am I here at last? and how long am I to remain in a place that looks like a dungeon, and smells damp and faint like a burying-vault?"

CHAPTER XV.

BEFORE conducting the reader into the interior of La Verrière, it is necessary that we bring up another group of the travellers, with whom we set out; for our narrative is like that of Sancho Panza, in which a certain number of sheep were to be ferried across a river one by one, and, if good count were not kept, the story was at an end.

Sir Archibald Douglas and David Armstrong, as we have seen, followed close upon the processional march of the Damsel of Laval; both interested in its progress, in the same manner, and in pretty nearly the same degree. The knight, however, had the advantage of his friend, inasmuch as he could talk boldly and openly of his hopes and his love; while our unfortunate scholar shut up his secret in the depths of his own bosom, where its stirrings were even as those of the sons of Titan. The knight, in fact, in spite of David's natural shrewdness, was at times inclined to suspect him of being not altogether composed in his intellects; and he did not scruple to attribute whatever damage he might have sustained therein to the vain studies in which he had found him engaged, and above all, to the doctrines of that pernicious heathen, Nigidius Figulus.

When the Damsel and her party were encamped for the night at Huguemont, the two friends were prowling about the neighbourhood and circling round the château like birds of prey. David, indeed, perhaps saw with his own eyes the wandering Jewess skimming along the path; but if so, the sympathy which should have revealed her to him, even through the guise of a peasant, must have been rendered powerless by the unhallowed nature of his passion. He knew her not, and she passed on her way.

"Tell me, Archibald," said he, when they awoke in the morning, "have you again been taking advantage of my eyes being shut, to get up and stravague about, like an evil-doer in the night?"

"On the contrary, I never slept more soundly in my life."

"That is well; for something tells me we are anon to have need of a stout arm. As for me, I am a man accustomed all my life to the study of humane learning, and to lie dreaming, from morn till night, under the peaceful trees of Academia. Even this sword is strange to my hand; it being *fustes*, called in the vernacular cudgels, that we more affected at the university, as instruments better adapted to scholastic humility, and the meekness of demeanour which befitteth Christian priests. However, I must do as I may. We do not excel in all things alike; and of few it can be said, '*Nec in armis præstantia quam in toga.*'" Notwithstanding this humility, however, as David bared his arm to the shoulder, to prepare for his morning ablutions, his eye rested with some

complacency upon a set of muscles, which would have done honour to a gladiator, or professional player with the sword.

"It is an indifferently good arm for a clerk," remarked the knight. "These muscles, moving under your skin like twisted steel, were no doubt nourished to their present growth by the exercise of turning over the leaves of your a, b, c! But whence is your presentiment of evil?"

"Of the devil, for aught I know. But be this as it may, the temple of Jupiter Patuleius is assuredly open, and the sooner you loosen your sword in its scabbard the better. The house of Mars last night entertained a visitor who rarely enters there for nothing; and I never dream as I have just now done, without awaking to strife in the morning."

"As for that same temple," said the knight, "they are all of them open in Paris every day in the year, morning, noon, and night; and it is better to awake to strife than be awakened by it; which I take to have been your case, David, in what you call your peaceful Academia, seven times a week. But come, what was your dream? Expound, as we amble along; for yonder we shall meet a group of peasants who have doubtless passed the procession."

"My dream," answered David, "was not of actions, but of feelings; not of places, but of void and vacancy. There was darkness around me, and clouds, and shadows. I was neither in the air, nor on the earth, nor in the waters. I sought, and could not find; I opened my eyes till they ached, and could see nothing; I stretched forth my hands, and emptiness was in my grasp. My life was disappointment. I was alone; and that was misery and agony, and terror—alone in eternal night—alone in illimitable space! Methought hell itself would have been a welcome refuge from such a doom."

"Mother of God!" cried the knight, "but that was a dream! Had I been you, I would have shouted to every saint in the calendar."

"All would have been in vain. I knew that the saints would spurn, and the demons laugh at my prayers. The anathema had gone forth, and I was a banished man alike from heaven and earth."

"I fear me, David," said the knight after a pause, and laying his hand affectionately upon his friend's shoulder, as they rode side by side—"I fear me, you have something worse on your conscience than the breaking even of tonsured crowns.

If so, take heart of grace, and lay the matter before the Holy Mother; or if you be ashamed exceedingly, begin with St. Bride, and she will help you on. If I myself may aid in your penance, either in person or purse, I am ready at a word; for well I wot, that however great be your sin, it is the sin of a Scot and a gentleman. Yet take heed, that no penance can avail without repentance. Take hold of this secret enemy of your soul, and cast it forth, even if it cling to your heart-strings: tear it away, even if blood and tears gush after it like water. Remember, O my friend! that the earth is but for a time; that our most darling vices are but as flowers that pass away; and give not up heaven for a perfume, and eternity for an hour!" Sir Archibald spoke with unction; and even at that moment, David could not help turning an admiring eye upon him, as he rode proudly and loftily on, with the air of a Christian knight who disdained to choose but between victory and martyrdom.

"I will repent first," said the scholar, "and confess afterwards. Yes," continued he, "catching the enthusiasm of his companion, "out it shall come, that poison-flower whose roots are the life-strings of my heart! The idolatrous image shall be broken, and its fragments cast forth. I promise, Archibald—and when I promise, not hell itself shall turn me back—I promise that within four-and-twenty hours—"

"Hush! we shall be presently overheard. Saint Bride understands what you would promise, and that is enough."

"I promise," continued David to himself, as the group of peasants came up, "that the image of Hagar shall forth from my breast, if I dig it out with my poinard! that is, after—after I learn that she has reached the homes of her unbelieving clan, and is there in safety—and peace—and honour!"

After Sir Archibald had asked his usual questions, and ascertained from the answers that Mademoiselle de Laval was in health and safety, and within very few hours' journey of her father's abode, David lingered to extract, if possible, without making a plain demand, the information most interesting to him.

"Does the Damsel journey alone," said he, "excepting her escort?"

"Alone."

"The wretched cattle!" (aside) "they count *her* for nobody!—That is, my worthy people, you would say, in some sort alone, as qualifying the expression. For instance, there

be her maidens, her two maidens, 'to kame her yellow hair,' as the song goes—and if I said three, perhaps I should not be far mistaken. Is it two of the feminine, or three, that follow the litter?"

"Two."

"Then one of the bower-lasses must have been taken sick at Huguemont; for those queans have dainty stomachs, that will not sit easy under any gallimaufry that may be going on the road." But the peasants assured him that the two they had seen were veritable bower-maidens, and that the damsel had had no other personal attendance from the first.

"And ye dare to tell me," said David, almost with a shout, yet growing pale at the same time, "that the Damsel and her two menials are the only feminine in the procession?"

"What advantage should we gain by telling a lie?" replied the peasants. "There is no other woman among them, gentle or simple; although we indeed heard some idle story of one who glided through the barred gate of Huguemont, and flashing along the road like an evil spirit, disappeared among the woods of La Verrière."

"It is no idle story," said another, "for I saw her with my own eyes. She was dressed in a cloak like one of ourselves; but beneath, I could see raiment of gold and silver, and wings upon her shoulders. She passed along quicker than the wind, yet without bending the grass; and her foot made no sound when it touched the earth."

"What is the matter, David?" cried the knight, "Are you clean distraught? or do you glare in that fashion to frighten the good people with the countenance of Hashmodai?"

"Silence, Archibald! In another moment I shall be able to think—and then act."

"Is it even so? Alas, I now see it all! Yet why this mystery with one who would trust his very soul to you? You love yonder damsel, whom I recommended to the protection of Mademoiselle de Laval; and although so noble-looking, she is perhaps the daughter of some mesalliance, and so your heart is torn asunder between pride and passion. But, courage! There is that in you which, with the aid of God and good fortune, would shed nobility upon a peasant's brow."

"O that she *were* a peasant! O that her father were a bondman, and her brothers and sisters the meanest of the slaves of the soil!"

"And even then you would love her—woo her—marry her?"

"I would kneel at her feet before the assembled world. I would sink myself to her station—or rather raise her to mine—ay, to loftier than mine. I would clear a way for her either with my wit, or my sword, till high-born dames should envy the fortune of my gracious bride! But come, let us spur on, for this is idle talk. If she is indeed at La Verrière, she is in the clutches of one who, if her own knowledge be correct, has neither fear nor mercy." They accordingly put their horses to their mettle, and rode on in silence; the knight more than ever perplexed with regard to David.

If it is not ignoble birth, thought he, which is the stumbling-block of my friend, what can it be? She is too young to have imbibed those heretical opinions which would be a just bar to their union; and David's mind is not of that substance which would become the thrall of mere beauty, unattended by worth. Is she already a bride, or the betrothed, of another? God forbid! that were worse than all! Or, has sin shed its withering influence on their love—and does the betrayer shrink from restoring peace to the bosom he has robbed of virtue?

The last supposition, although the most dishonourable to his friend, appeared, under all circumstances, the most probable; and Sir Archibald, after musing upon the subject for some hours, in the course of which he sighed heavily and often shook his head, at length caught hold of his companion's bridle, and bringing both horses to a sudden halt, planted himself before him, face to face.

"It is now time," said he, fixing a severe look upon the culprit, "before accepting the assistance you have offered me, to know whether I can honourably render you assistance in return. Answer me, yea or nay, and as plainly as I ask the question: Is it your purpose, after delivering this damsel from the hands of her enemies, to marry her according to the forms of holy church?"

"Now God forbid!" cried David, starting back; "and may the saints forgive you for putting such a thought into my head?"

"You love her," continued the knight, elevating himself on his saddle, till he sat as stiffly as his lance; "and many things that escaped my apprehension at the time convince me now that you love not in vain. The parting glance which

she gave you in the *Pomme du Pin* I read only as touching the awkwardness of her then situation; but there was in it, nevertheless, fear, sorrow, regret, warning, supplication, secret understanding, shame! Nay, hearken, for I will not be silent. If you have fallen into the snares of sin, it is no reason why you should plunge deeper at every step. The seducer is himself seduced by a more potent spirit of evil than his own; and so his fault may in some sort be reckoned rather weakness than crime. But if, after the hour of intoxication is over, he refuse to repair the mischief he has done—to give back the peace of which he has robbed his victim—to build up anew the honour he has cast down—he must be accounted an outlaw of nature, a wilful and purposed felon; and must live henceforth a man forbid, excommunicated as it were, from all offices of friendship and affection. That man, were he now before me, I would try, as a christian, to recall to the paths of honour; and, if my appeal were unsuccessful, it would become my bounden duty, as a knight and a gentleman, to renounce him for ever! Speak! Am I mistaken? But no—thou art the man!”

David, after in vain endeavouring to stop the torrent of the knight's eloquence, had listened to this speech with varying emotions of shame and indignation. At its conclusion he became deadly pale.

“Sir Knight,” said he, “however heavily your accusation might bear against me in a moral and religious sense, it but lightly affects my character, according to the standard of honour recognized in our present world; and, for the sake of old friendship, I gladly make use of the pretext for forgiving you, so far as your remarks apply to me individually. With regard to her, however, whom I was so foolish and so unhappy as to intrust to the safeguard of your recommendation, I have another duty to perform. Anent her—who is as pure as any virgin of your house—you have most foully lied in your thought; and in her behalf, Sir Archibald Douglas, called of the Braes, I hereby deliver to you my mortal defiance, in the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George!” and David backed his horse several paces, and drew his sword.

The knight was inwardly pleased that his suspicions had proved to be unfounded, although not a little chafed by the uncourteous terms in which his companion had replied.

“If this is a feud, said he, after a moment's hesitation, “which may be prevented by acknowledgment of error on

one side, and the retraction of dishonourable words on the other, I say, for the sake of old times, let there be peace between us. But if not—" and he slung his shield behind him, and fixed his lance upright, that he might have no advantage over his opponent—"the Douglas sword must not remain in sheath when its master is defied."

"Bare not your blade," cried David suddenly, "for my spirit is vexed within me, and the sight of a naked sword may be more than the placability of my nature can withstand. I say not with you, let there be peace between thee and me; but only, let there be a truce for a while. I am weary of mystery; and I postpone my challenge, till I can repeat it with an uncovered face." They were yet in a belligerent attitude, Sir Archibald delaying to remove his hand from the hilt of his weapon, till David had first returned his into the scabbard—when a peasant girl rushed in between them.

"For shame, messires," she said, "do you prove your love for your lady by seeking each to deprive her of a friend at a time when she is more than ever in need of friendship? She for whom you would fight is now safe at La Verrière; although safe for how long no one can tell."

"Then it is even true," cried David, "and she fled, like an unconscious dove, into the snare! Tell me not of safety at La Verrière. Its very atmosphere is poison; and I will away to administer the antidote, or die with her."

"It is of the Damsel of Laval she speaks," said Sir Archibald—"this is she who gave me the midnight warning."

"Are you for La Verrière?" demanded Marie, turning from her quondam acquaintance, and looking at the student with strong interest and curiosity—"Are you bidden? are you summoned? are you sent?"

"I am."

"You come from messire Jean of Poitou?" continued she, sinking her voice to a whisper, half of terror, half of pity.

David nodded.

"And this is he!—the Third!" she glided up close to his horse's side—"Will you be warned?" said she, speaking rapidly, "will you turn back? or are you driven on by inevitable destiny? *Death* awaits you there—a cruel, bloody, and secret death! 'This is true as if an angel from God had spoken it. Will you still go?"

"I will."

"Then all is true ! Do you know that there were two before you ?"

"Yes."

"God help us ! but this is a strange and awful doom. So young—so handsome—so brave !"

"I tell you, David," interposed Sir Archibald ; "she spoke of the Damsel of Laval. Your hooded maiden, who is so nimble and noiseless of foot, may have escaped to Nantes, since it seems there is something for her to dread at La Verrière."

"It is of the damsel I spoke," said Marie. "As for the other, she is a living mystery, and never walks abroad but in a cloud. God knows it grieves me to think ill of one so fair and so pure looking ; but appearances are woefully against her." She then described her meeting with Hagar, and the escape of the latter, and went on thus :

"And now, messires, she was at length fairly at Nantes, in open day, and in the midst of a crowd where no harm could befall her. The dread she had had of La Verrière was natural enough :—it is a dread that even I should feel, humble as I am, and no more to be compared to her in beauty than the weed is to the flower—had I not been, from my earliest girlhood, under the special protection of the Damsel of Laval. She had fled from this supposed danger,—in a word, from the lord de Retz—whom, as she assured me, with all the apparent truth and innocence of an angel, she had never *seen*."

"No more she had !" interrupted David, "never even with the unconscious eyes of infancy."

"Their recognition, then, of each other was a miracle ! When the procession of the mystery was passing by, she stood up, when everybody else knelt, straining her eyes to catch a glimpse of the baron. He at length turned round when he was just beside her, and they smiled and bowed, as if they had been prince and princess !"

"Woman," said David, sternly, "however gentle your tongue may be, you have yet but a peasant's apprehension. The bow of the lord de Retz was a homage which the libertine pays to beauty : hers was the habitual and almost unconscious obeisance of one who is so noticed by a superior."

"But she was noticed still more condescendingly. She was invited to a seat in one of the principal galleries ; and she who had fled from La Verrière in such haste accepted its master's offer without a moment's hesitation."

"Hesitation would have been impolitic and unavailing; and she is one whose thought flies like lightning to the mark. Had she been called, under such circumstances, to the scaffold, she would have mounted with a step just as ready and composed."

"I am not her accuser," said Marie mildly, "I would a thousand times rather be her advocate; but as soon as the mystery was over, she descended from the gallery, inquired her way of those she saw in the street, and walked straight to the hôtel de la Suze, the mansion of the lord de Retz!"

David looked as if he had been struck dead in his saddle; but the next moment, starting into life, he bent forward, caught hold of the girl with one nervous arm, and, stripping off her hood with the other, held up her face. It was a pale, fair face, rendered beautiful by the blush which his earnest scrutiny brought into her cheeks. The head might have sate without question upon the shoulders of a baroness, for it exhibited none of the peculiarities of her condition. It was a portrait of woman; in which mercy, gentleness, and truth were rendered still more apparent by the gleams of intellect which shot from her eyes. David released her with a deep sigh.

"Forgive me," said he, "you have spoken the truth as you understand it. Yet will I rather believe it to be all a magical illusion than distrust her. Her enemy was not the lord de Retz—she was not even fully aware of the libertinism of his character. I pray you forgive me, and tell me, if you can, where she now is."

"That I do not know; but the baron is expected at La Verrière this evening, and I have no doubt that she will be with him, either by force or good-will."

"Farewell then, Archibald; let us part as friends, however we may meet."

"Stay, messire, you cannot possibly be there before sunset, and after that hour no one may pass even the first draw-bridge without being able to give the word. Besides, it is not your time. Why attempt to hasten the doom that is upon you, even by a single night? Stay with us at our village, which is close by; and where, in the morning, a ceremony is to take place, not worth your seeing indeed, but which will help to pass the time till the lord de Retz can be spoken with,"

"Be it so," said David. "Come Archibald," and he rode

on, forgetting in his preoccupation of mind, that he left her who was to have been his conductress behind.

"Tell me," said the knight, in a whisper, as he prepared to follow, "tell me, for the love either of courtesy or of a broad piece of silver, what is the name of yonder damsel errant of whom you spoke?"

"I cannot tell," replied Marie, "for I do not know."

"Her country?"

"She has no country."

"How!"

"She is a JEWESS."

"Sacred heaven! my worst guesses were as nothing to this!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE scholar's presentiment of strife must be held to have been realized by his quarrel with Sir Archibald; for nothing else occurred that day, tending in any measure to the hostile display even of *fustes*. At the village, all was peace or good-humoured merriment; and even Lisette, the sister of Jehan, who was supposed to have formerly had some notion of appropriating the bridegroom's affections to herself, seemed to bear her disappointment with great equanimity. The hero of the night was as joyous as a very tolerable dose of wine could be expected to render a man looking forward to so serious a ceremony in the morning; although it must be confessed that he checked himself occasionally in his mirth, and looked inquiringly at Marie, with somewhat of the expression of a noisy boy, who doubts whether his elder sister will not think him a little too obstreperous. If any one demands how this union came about, we answer, that it came about in the natural course of things. The bride, both in regard of beauty and sense, was a fair mark for a villager's ambition; and when Victoire proposed, Marie, although not in love, thought he would do for a husband a little better than any one else she knew, in the degree to which her choice was limited. The *necessity* of a husband at all, might be another question, if Marie had been thirty or forty years older.

The more David reflected upon the adventures of Hagar, the less gloomily he was disposed to view the subject. A pang of doubt had indeed shot across his mind at the moment when Marie mentioned that she had entered of her own accord the house of the lord de Retz, but this was speedily dismissed, as unworthy both of him and her. He felt that the risk had been run for *his sake*, and the idea would have been productive of as much pain as pleasure, had he not also believed her to be too wise and clear-sighted, to have gone into the lion's den without knowing well how to get out again. Hagar was, by this time, he had little doubt, in safety with her friends at Nantes; and to-morrow he could begin with an untroubled mind—here David sighed heavily—his singular and dangerous apprenticeship.

By this time, he, as well as Sir Archibald, had spoken more fully with Marie, whose frankness was increased by the impunity with which she had hitherto touched upon the forbidden subject; and, although the mystery which enveloped La Verrière was as opaque as ever, he now saw, with tolerable distinctness, the fate threatened to himself. His unbelieving master had, no doubt, good cause for the horror with which he regarded Prelati; for his too disciples had indeed been murdered. David, from the conversation he had overheard between the Jew and this person, could easily trace the esoteric meaning of the popular legend recited by Marie. Messire Jean, it was justly said, had fallen into the power of the Evil One, for he had been detected by Prelati in the commission of a crime which placed him for ever more at his mercy. Prelati, besides, knew of his abode at Paris, in contravention of the savage edict against the Jews; and thus he had been able to say, and say truly, "What more have I to do than name your name, or even point with my finger, to have you and your daughter torn to pieces, the fragments burnt with fire, and their ashes scattered upon the winds of heaven?"

Since the fatal day when the Alchemist had fallen into the power of this man, he had bought his safety it appeared, sometimes with gold, sometimes with human blood. This was the mystey. If Prelati was not the Fiend himself, in carnal form, what was the meaning of these horrible sacrifices? Was he really engaged in some such high researches as he had hinted at to the alchemist? and was the blood of his assistants to flow upon the altar of the infernal deities?

or, what was still more probable, were their lives to become forfeit at the moment when their progress in the science had rendered them rivals of their master.

Who was this Prelati, whom he had seen alive with his own eyes, yet who was believed even in the neighbourhood of La Verrière to have perished at sea? It was surely impossible that Orosmandel could have any connexion with such atrocities; yet was it not equally so that they could be carried on without the philosopher's knowledge? What, in fine, was the relative position of Gilles de Retz himself between these two men, each so different, each so extraordinary, each so mysterious? It was in vain to puzzle himself with such inquiries. Every thing around him was as incoherent as the wildest dream that had ever flitted before his imagination. Nothing was certain but the danger which threatened himself.

It will easily be conceived by those who are still in the heyday of youth, and also by those who are able to remember that era distinctly, that there must have been something still more attractive than terrifying to David Armstrong in the idea of exploring the depths of such a mystery. This feeling of the young and the bold, although perhaps nothing more than an elevated species of curiosity, is the grand material of the old romancers. It is this which is personified in the chivalrous adventurer who plunges into the gloom of primeval forests, and sounds the horn at the gate of enchanted castles. But as for David, who belonged to a people who were, at the epoch, as individuals, the most adventurous in Europe, he, no doubt, felt strongly enough the spirit of enterprise: yet in him this was controlled by a certain degree of judgment, or forethought—still better developed among his countrymen in modern times—and if honour permitted, he would, in vulgar phrase, have “jouked and let the jaw go by” with any canny Scot in the realm.

His motives, therefore, were of a mixed character. Curiosity, or youthful daring, may have led the van; but selfish speculation came immediately after. Gilles de Retz he thought, as has been mentioned before, was the dupe of Prelati, and in saving one of the greatest and most influential ords of the time from ruin, the young Scot thought he could not miss making his own fortune. Next came friendship; for, in spite of their frequent quarrels, David would at any time have perilled his life in order to advance the prospects

of Sir Archibald; and gliding in among them all, appeared the veiled and shadowy form of Hagar, the interests and the very being of whose house appeared so closely inwoven with the mysteries of La Verrière, that he could hardly separate them in imagination.

After passing all the details of the subject in review before him, David came to the same conclusion with which he had set out. In the first place, even if his indefinite projects should fail, the danger that threatened him, judging by the history of the two former victims, could not be immediate; in the second place, he had a quick eye to see it afar off when actually on its way; and lastly, his nerves were good, and his arm strong and ready for self-defence—while, if the odds were too strong against him, he could show as light a pair of heels as any lad on the Borders, from sea to sea.

The meditations of Sir Archibald were employed upon the same subject, and their result will appear in the following conversation which he held with his friend in the morning.

“David,” said he, “after due consideration, I have now to demand your pardon for my unworthy suspicions, and to grant you mine, even before you ask it, for a hasty word drawn from a heart which at the moment must have been filled with bitterness and confusion. I will not ask in what manner you became connected with the family—for they are father and daughter I will be sworn—of the individual who is called, no doubt by way of a *nom de guerre*, messire Jean of Poitou; for well I wot you must have fallen through ignorance into the snare laid for you by the enemy of mankind. Neither will I speculate on the manner in which this history is to end. Your heart, my friend, is not one that will give up so easily as even you yourself may imagine, an object it has once taken into its very being; and rather than see your young life pass away like a shadow, I would build upon the goodness of the ever-Virgin in vouchsafing to change the spirit—”

“Then would you build in vain,” interrupted David gloomily, “for Hagar will be faithful alike in good and bad.”

“Let me pass on, then, to what I have to say, leaving the rest to the mercy of Providence. It appears, from all we have been able to gather, that you have been trepanned into this appointment at La Verrière by messire Jean; that you have been sold as it were, to the Adversary; and that, after a certain time, you will be offered up to him as a blood-sacrifice. If this be true, the arm of the flesh will avail nothing.

But Satan, for all his cunning may be cheated. I, for instance, am a Christian Knight; my soul is unsoiled by such devilries as the transmutation of metals, or other profane and unlawful delusions; and I thank God I own another master than Nigulus Figulus. Let me take your place, since there must needs be the likeness of a third victim; the only eye I shall have to avoid will be that of Orosmandel; and if you will instruct me in what I have to do and to say, I have no doubt that by the blessing of St. Bride, to whom I commit my protection, I shall bring the adventure to a happy issue."

"Had you listened," replied David, "to the explication I offered of the synodal statute *De Sortilegiis*, an imperfect knowledge of which seems to have clouded your understanding—"

"I declare before heaven I have no knowledge of it whatever!"

"Well, well; you would, at least, have learnt that alchemy cannot justly be reckoned among either the profane or unlawful sciences. The miraculous stone is not a delusion, but a reality; and to question the possibility of the *Elixir Vitæ*, is to assign limits to the power and goodness of God. But with all this unbelief,"—and David's solemnity of visage relaxed into a broad grin—"methinks you conjoin a very extraordinary degree of credulity. I am sold, it seems, by a magician! I am to be offered up as a blood-sacrifice to the devil! *Diabolum ludificare!*—I should, indeed, make a precious bargain. My poor friend, this is all very well for a soldier, but a scholar is not so easy of faith. Trust me, the affair in hand will be decided, not by spells and cautrips, but by the arm of the flesh, and the wit of the spirit."

"Be it so," said the knight; "and then the question comes to be, which of us two is the fitter man for the adventure; I, who, as a soldier, must perforce know some little matter of defences and onslaughts, ay, and ruses and ambushes; or you, who, at the best, have but led on Bauldy, and Nigel, and Andrew, at the university, to the breaking of a few pows, bare even of the hair which nature gave them for a defence? Besides, David, I would fain see you take your vows in right earnest, and rise, before you die, to be at least a cardinal; while, as for me, if I do fall in the attempt, it is but the casualty of a knight-adventurer in the way of his business—and the greater luck would be his, to die within the very walls that hold the lady of his love!"

"Archibald, my man," said David, taking his friend's

hand, and clearing his throat of a kind of huskiness which had beset it; "you are about as fine a fellow as ever poised a lance since the days of St. George! But it may not be. You have a career before you worthy of your ambition; and the very difficulties in the way of your love should only be a greater excitement to a Douglas bosom. As for me, I must follow out my fate; and, if the worst befall, it is but a poor scholar the less, and a single ray of science extinct."

The knight saw that it would be in vain to press farther his generous offer; and the two friends passed the remainder of the time in arranging the manner in which David, while at the château, might act most beneficially for his ally.

They were called up in the morning by those musical sounds which usually usher in a bridal day; and which, in the case of the sons and daughters of poverty (as well as in a few other cases,) may be said to resemble the clear, loud, last twang of a harp-string when it is breaking. The whole village was already a-stir; and a smile was on every face they saw, except one. The bride could not be said to be either happy or otherwise. She was quiet and sedate as usual, and would have been the very last person whom a stranger would have taken for the heroine of the day.

"She looks," whispered the knight, "as if she thought a little of this merriment might be spared."

"I warrant," replied David, "the verguncula is busy with the future. She is thinking what else than the fountains of her own bosom she will have to offer the knave-bairns when they come. Alas! in that day there will be no mirth; and, I fear me, but little love. Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus: an adagium, Archibald, which means, that connubial affection dwindles down with the meal-poke. But I must now away. Marie, I thank you heartily for your hospitality—and for more than that, which I may one day be able to repay. I wish you all manner of happiness, and especially the gift of patient endurance; in token whereof I beg you will permit me, in the room of a more eloquent valediction, to touch your cheek with my lips, ere yet its virgin-flowers are gathered."

"I thank you, messire," replied Marie, "for your good wishes, and not the less that they suit the time so closely. As for my cheek, since its wild flowers—for such is the name which our fabliers give to weeds—are still my own, I shall accept humbly the honour you intend them; but on condition that you tarry with us yet a little while. There is the bride-

song now to be sung, a custom preserved in Brittany from the old time ; and, although I never heard it myself, yet my cousin Lisette has a sweet voice, and that will make it worth the hearing. Will you still go ?" continued Marie, sinking her voice to a whisper ; " Will you not be warned ?"

" I will first hear the bride-song," answered David, gently ; and Marie, glad even of the brief respite she had gained for the third victim, turned away to take her place in the ceremony.

" She was crowned with flowers, and seated on a chair in the middle of a wide circle formed by the wedding guests. Her betrothed stood near her ; and Lisette, the sister of Jehan, tripping out from the crowd, and planting herself directly opposite the bride, fixed earnestly her keen bright eyes upon her face, and commenced a song, which is to this day sung on such occasions in the valleys of Brittany.

" List Marie, list the nightingale,
The singer of our native vale !
Alas ! a dearer voice they say,
Hath drowned the burden of his lay,
Which tells, in warning notes, the pain,
The weight of an eternal chain.
Yet, Marie, list the nightingale,
The sweet, wise singer of the vale !

" List, Marie, list—that lovely strain
Shall never reach thy heart again !
Another voice thou soon wilt hear,
Another music fill thine ear—
Not *always* like the gentle tale
Of the sweet singer of the vale !
List, Marie, list the nightingale,
The sweet, kind singer of the vale !"

Here the emphasis of the bridemaids made some of the listeners laugh ; and Marie, who had doubtless expected quite another kind of wedding lay, opened her eyes upon her friend in grave surprise. Lisette, however, went on with new earnestness, fixing a look upon the bride's face, which David remarked to his companion might have " peeled off the skin."

Hark ! yet another voice doth come
To swell the discord of sweet home—
The cry, long, peevish, and forlorn,
Of thy young babe, thy earliest born !

Mingle the wife's, the mother's wail,
 No more she hears the nightingale.
 List, Marie, list the nightingale,
 The sweet, blithe singer of the vale !

"Swiftly love's honeymoon hath past,
 Then coldness comes—scorn—ire at last :
 Slowly goes by the cheerless day,
 More slowly creeps the night away.
 Perching the neighbour trees among,
 The owl doth join her cradle song.
 List, Marie, list the nightingale,
 The sweet, gay singer of the vale !"

Marie darted a look of indignation upon the impertinent monitress, and turned away ~~her~~ chair; but Lisette moved round at the same moment, and confronting her as before, fixed anew her eyes on her face, and continued the nuptial song.

"Go then, devoted girl, and give,
 For love that but a moon doth live,
 The love of years; the village green
 For the lone housewife's silent scene;
 The music of the nightingale
 For the owl's harsh and boding tale!
 Thou wilt not hear the nightingale,
 The singer of our native vale.

"Love, man's good angel, doth depart,
 And demons seize the vacant heart.
 The goblet flows; rude jest and song,
 Till dawn the wild debauch prolong :
 Meantime the wife, by taper dim,
 Sings, with the owl, her cradle hymn.
 List, Marie, list the nightingale,
 The singer of our native vale !

"Wine leads to folly—madness—crime—"

Marie started up, her eyes flashing with anger, and her bosom heaving like the vexed wave; but, recollecting herself, she sat down again, sweeping round her chair, however, till her back was turned to the singer. Lisette tripped round in the same instant; and, fastening her eyes earnestly upon her face, resumed the interrupted song.

"Wine leads to folly—madness—crime;
 The rattling dice harmonious chime
 To his hoarse laugh; till, one by one,
 Fields, flocks, and house, and home are gone!

He then returns by morning's sun
To her he dares not look upon.

List, Marie, list the nightingale,
The sweet, wise singer of the vale !

" Bed—cradle—distaff—all are gone.
Hence, wanderer !—but not hence alone :
Take thy young baby on thy back,
And follow in thy husband's track,
Lonely and haggard, mute and pale,
Away from thy dear native vale !

No more thou'lt hear the nightingale,
No more thou'lt see our native vale !"

The bride's courage could hold no longer. She turned away from her betrothed, who stood trying to smile with all his might ; and throwing herself upon the neck of her nearest companion, burst into tears.* David took advantage of the confusion, mingled with jeers and laughter, which this incident occasioned ; and gripping his friend's hand for a moment, almost as fiercely as the operation had been performed by the Black Knight, he glided swiftly away in the direction of La Verrière.

The scholar pursued his way, according to the directions he had previously received ; and at length reached a spot which commanded a view of the château of La Verrière. It was an object far less formidable than he had expected ; for the buildings, though extensive, were low, and possessed nothing of the imposing grandeur with which his imagination had invested the place. Their black colour, however, the strange lifelessness of the Erdre, and the unnatural stillness which seemed to brood over the whole scene, impressed him with a feeling approaching to awe ; and a thought of the village he had just left, its smiling faces, and even the mirthful malice of Lisette's song, came back upon him like a regret.

He went on, however, without looking back, till he imagined that he must be in the immediate neighbourhood of the château ; but this landmark had now entirely disappeared, and the adventurer, bewildered by the number of low eminences swelling around him in inextricable confusion, each exactly resembling the others, and all covered with trees,

* The above is a close translation of a very spirited French song, purporting to be one usually sung at the nuptials of the Breton villagers. The translator regrets that he cannot call to mind where he found the original.

stopped short to inquire whether he had not committed some mistake. He had set out on a well-beaten path ; but this had no sooner conducted him into the wilderness, than it shot out into so many branches, that it could no longer serve for a guide. The multiplicity of paths, in fact, was in itself a very remarkable circumstance ; and he observed that they rarely proceeded far without sweeping into a curve, the termination of which was lost among the trees. Sometimes this could be accounted for by the intervention of a wooded eminence, or a swamp ; but even when these obstacles were not in the way, the same eccentric course was observed.

David was unwilling to proceed farther in uncertainty, and climbed a tree in order to discover his bearings. He found that his progress, though slow, had been in the proper direction. The turrets of the château were visible above an intervening wood, at no great distance ; and the smooth bosom of the Erdre, shone on by the sun, was almost too bright to be looked on. In his descent, he had gained the lowest branch of the tree, and was just about to spring to the ground, when the appearance of a female figure within fifty yards of the spot made him pause. David rubbed his eyes, to make sure that he was awake ; for it was the village-bride he saw, in her bridal dress, and with the chaplet of flowers still on her head !

Marie passed on her way, in her usual composed manner, looking neither to the right nor to the left, and pursued her path into a thick grove, where she disappeared from his eyes. His first impulse was to call out her name ; but checking this, he hardly knew from what motive, he leaped down, and sprang after her as lightly as a grey-hound. In the grove the path divided into two branches, and in all probability he took the wrong one ; for, on emerging from the gloom of the trees, he found no trace of her whom he sought. It was impossible, however, that she could be far distant—certainly not a great number of yards ; and he put his hand to his mouth to give a hollo, which, if she recognised his voice, would probably produce an answer.

At the moment his elbow was touched by some one behind ; and David, when he had turned round, good as he had boasted his nerves to be, started back several feet, and clapped his hand to his sword.

“ Holy mother of God ! ” cried he, “ what art thou ? Answer, if thou hast the gift of speech ! ”

"I am my master's man," replied the dwarf, "and thou art no better!"

"Then is your master Beelzebub, you misbegotten imp! Holy Mary! that my heart should have leaped into my mouth for a jackanapes! Speak. Why come you? What is your business?"

"I come because I am sent; and my business is to welcome thee to La Verrière."

"I am much beholden to you; in troth I thank you heartily, and there is an end. Let us now part in God's name; for I promise you I would rather have a man of six feet, in full armour, rise up before me out of the sod, than a shape like that—*larvalis habitus*, as we say—drop down upon my traces in the midst of a wood, like an acorn from a tree."

"I know it, David," replied the dwarf, with a grin, "but for all that we must be better acquainted. Wert thou as nice of vision as any girl of fifteen, thou wilt soon get accustomed to me, and we shall be good comrades. What, shall we not be brothers? If we must labour with our necks in the same yoke, shall we not also take our diversion? I will show thee a way through the swamp where the ground is thinnest, and when the nights are darkest; I will teach thee to follow the corpse-lights into the thick of the fen; sometimes we shall hunt the grey bat with bow and arrow, or mock the owl—which is rarer sport—when he singeth to the-moon; and sometimes, for the sake of variety, we shall spear the snake as he rustles homeward through the grass, or fish toads in the ditches of the château. Toads! these be capital sport! Your toads of La Verrière are three times the ordinary size; they carry poison enough under their tongue to fill you a phial: and then to see them goggling and gasping when they come up—ho! ho! ho! it is excellent, I promise thee!"

While the dwarf was speaking, David examined him attentively from head to foot, and before he had done, was sorry for the disrespect with which he had treated Sir Archibald's superstition. The creature before his eyes had nothing about him but the outward form; and that was imitated so miserably, that the beholder could only have been prevented from laughing by horror. This *lusus naturæ*, however, this goblin, whichever he might chance to be, was to be his comrade at La Verrière. Of what nature, in the name of God, could be their duty, since for recreation they were to

follow the ignis fatuus over bogs—turn the bird of Minerva into ridicule—fish reptiles for trouts—and bottle poison? The scholar began to ask himself what pressing business he had there at all. Hagar was off his hands; and even her father could not suffer blame, if his apprentice did not choose to be indented to Satan. At all events, concluded he, go with a guide like this I will not. I shall return forthwith to the village, and take a human conductor thence to the château tomorrow morning. Thus the enchantment will be broken which the wench Marie would persuade me I am under; the appointed day will be past and gone; and I shall make my appearance at the gate a free man, and not like a jongleur taken prisoner, and led in by his own jackanapes.

"Hark ye, friend," said he; "I was brought up to spear salmon in the river, and strike deer in the forest; and my stomach would ill brook the grewsome sports you intimate. But '*trahit sua quemque voluptas*;' which is equivalent to the expression made use of by the old woman who kissed her cow. I do not accuse your tastes, but I follow my own. For my part, I had ever a horror of toads and serpents; and I pray you to notice, that I will in no wise be art or part in such unseemly pastimes. And now stand out of my way, that I may return whence I came, seeing that my morning's walk is at an end."

"Thy morning's walk!" repeated the dwarf, opening his goggle eyes; and dost thou absolutely fancy that it is *thy* walk thou art taking—that thou art here on thy own business or pleasure—that, in fact thou still belongest to thyself?"

"That is decidedly my belief and opinion," replied the scholar. "It is true I may be said to have bargained to take on service for a time in the laboratory of him at La Verrière; since the very habiliments I now wear, as well as a horse which I left at the village, may be looked upon as the *arrha*, or earnest money. Thus much I freely concede; saying nothing of an epitogium or graduate's cloak of my own (on account of its being somewhat the worse for wear) which I ceded up at the same time. Still, no precise day of entrance was mentioned, and for that matter, no precise period of service; and I accordingly hold myself my own master, while I remain on this side the threshold of the château."

"Admirably argued," exclaimed the dwarf, and he broke into a laugh so shrill and wild, that the whole grove rung with it.

"Stand out of my way, you hellicate imp!" cried the

startled scholar, "were it not shame to offer violence to such a pigmy—that is, supposing you to be anything else than a phantasma—I would send you to fish for toads in yonder quagmire. Away, you misbegotten knave!" and threatening him with his sheathed sword, he turned back by the path by which he had come; the dwarf stood his ground till the enemy began to move; but he then made instantaneous way for him, by leaping to a surprising distance out of the path, and disappeared among the trees with screams of laughter, like an evil spirit.

David pursued his route in not a little confusion of mind; and yet, by no means, feeling confident that he had acted a part worthy of his sires and country, in postponing an enterprise he had undertaken, for no better reason than that he had met a misshapen dwarf upon the road. This personage was now richly dressed, in a kind of eastern costume, covered with hieroglyphics, and letters apparently of an unknown language. He might have seemed to be the page of some great lord, thus decked out at his master's capricious fancy; and his strange discourse might have been nothing more than the dictates of an intellect, sometimes as weak and crooked, in persons of this unhappy class, as their bodies.

The adventurer walked on, plunged in meditation, till at length he began to be somewhat surprised that he had not already reached the village. The same character of scenery prevailed, the same confusion of woods and eminences; and he was under the necessity of again having recourse to the expedient of climbing a tree. It may be conceived with what astonishment he found on reaching the top, that, instead of having progressed towards the village, he was much nearer the château than before! At the moment he made this discovery, the shrill laugh of the dwarf smote upon his ear; and he descended both in anger and perturbation of mind.

He now walked on with less confidence. He saw clearly that the paths were meant less to guide than to bewilder; and, although but little versed in mathematics, the idea occurred to him, as just possible, that they might have been constructed for the very purpose of preventing escape from La Verrière. A still greater work of art, thought he, must have been the Cretan labyrinth, (to say nothing of the greater prodigy of Egypt, and the lesser ones of Lemnos and Italy;) and for all that, Dædalus, though a cunning man of artifice, was no magician. While comforting himself, however, with this idea,

he could not resist a growing conviction, that in the whole of this affair he had been the subject of a species of fatality ; and when at length he saw at a short distance through the trees a portion of masonwork, it was with but little confidence he exclaimed, "There is the village." It was the château of La Verrière.

Again, the same eldritch laugh met his ear ; but the sound was now close by, and the dwarf, dropping down from the bough of a tree, stood beside him.

"Thou hast thought better of it, David," said he, "and we are to be comrades after all ! Since thou art thy own master, thou must be here of thy own purpose ; and accepting the token as a testimony of good will to me, thy fellow-servant, I shall now conduct thee to the gate, if so be thy pleasure."

"Lead on," replied David, "for I will follow." They now emerged altogether from the trees ; and a fair view of the fortress was no sooner obtained, than the student forgot his personal feelings in the admiration which it inspired.

The ditch was an immense canal, in which a modern frigate might have swam, and its border was thickly planted with sharp iron spikes. Beyond this, the ramparts, constructed of earth, rose like a chain of hills. They were battlemented at the top, girded by a chemise of solid stone, and defended from distance to distance by half-moons. Above the gate towered a lofty corps de garde, which was bristled with the lances of sentinels ; and on the ramparts, at either side, the muzzle was presented of an enormous iron culverine, each twenty-four feet long, and so solid, that it must have been moved with difficulty by fifty horses. A pile of balls, of corresponding magnitude, lay near these gigantic pieces of artillery, some of stone, and some of lead.

The visitor had never seen the like, except in fortified towns of the first class ; although even these monstrous dimensions were a reduction lately introduced. The earlier cannon had been found by experience to be somewhat unmanageable, being from fifty to sixty feet long, with balls of five or six hundred pounds' weight !

David expected to be closely questioned at the gate, but at the sight of his conductor he was allowed to pass without remark, and he found himself fairly within the walls of La Verrière. Winding their way through jungles and morasses, where they might have imagined themselves to be still in the open country, they at length arrived at the second, and then

at the third inclosure ; and when about to cross the last draw-bridge, it was not without some secret emotion that the scholar saw pointed at him from the wall, one at either side of the gate, two hand culverines, which one man poised on his shoulder, while another behind, directing its aim, held a lighted match in his hand, ready to fire.

He entered, however, as before, without question ; and crossing the square or court, was introduced into the low, black building, guarded so jealously. Here he was left alone for some time in the dimly-lighted hall ; and we shall take the opportunity of opening to the reader the door of the chamber to which he was about to be summoned. But this demands a new chapter.

END OF VOL. I.

THREE YEARS IN THE PACIFIC, including notices of Brazil, Chili, Bolivia, and Peru. In one vol. By an Officer of the United States' Navy.

"The work embraces copious descriptions of the countries visited; graphic accounts of the state of society; brief notices of the history, state of the arts, climate, and the future prospects of those interesting parts of our continent; respecting which the citizens of the United States are supposed to care much, but know so little."

"Full of novelty and valuable details. The American reader will greatly add to his fund of ideas concerning South America by its perusal."—*Chronicle*.

"The author's graphic abilities—the pure acquaintance he displays with the Spanish language, renders his book at once pleasing and useful."—*Gaz.*

"Such contributions to our stock of ideas and literature, deserve a warmer welcome and wider patronage than the common-place or extravagant fictions of the day."—*National Gazette*.

"Much new and valuable information, imbodyed in excellent language; there cannot be a moment's doubt of its popularity."—*Jour. of Belles Lettres*.

STRANGER IN AMERICA, written after a trip from Philadelphia to Niagara. Edited by Dr. FRANCIS LIEBER. In one vol. 8vo.

"The mingling of anecdote, the abrupt breaks, personal narration, illustrative comparisons, and general style of the work, give it an interest that will ensure to the book general perusal—while the philosophical tone which occasionally pervades its pages cannot fail of commending them to the approval of the reflecting."—*U. S. Gazette*.

"We have read this work with great satisfaction and interest. It abounds with characteristic anecdotes, graphic descriptions, and principles which do honour to the head and heart of the author."—*Nat. Intelligencer*.

The style of these Letters is, in general, very good; sometimes poetical and eloquent.

"Here is a well written series of Letters, by a learned German, who has lived long enough among us, it appears, to examine the peculiarities of our government and habits, with the impartial eye of a philosopher."—*Baltimore paper*.

"This is a very agreeable book—rambling, sprightly, anecdotal, and withal, interspersed with much useful and practical information, and keen and accurate observation."—*New York American*.

SKETCHES OF SOCIETY IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND. By C. S. Stewart, M. A., Chaplain of the United States' Navy, author of "A Visit to the South Seas," "A Residence in the Sandwich Islands," &c. In two vols. 12mo.

"Some of his sketches are beautiful descriptions; others are finished pictures. The charm of these volumes consists in the distinct view which the author gives us of the scenery, the country, the cities and towns, the aristocracy, the churches,—in one word, the thousand particulars, which, together, constitute what is called the state of society."—*Religious Telegraph*.

"We have seldom perused a work with so pleasant an interest. The contents are various and racy, epistolary transcripts of the author's mind, published just as written, without revisions, and with all the gloss and freshness of first and original impressions about them. The work is full of living pictures."

"His observations on men and manners, in his description of the different scenes to which his pilgrimage was extended, are given in a style of the most flowing and attractive kind."—*N. Y. Courier*.

THIRTY YEARS' CORRESPONDENCE, between John Jebb, D. D. F. R. S., Bishop of Limerick, Ardfert, and Aghadoc; and Alexander Knox, Esq., M. R. I. A. Edited by the Rev. Charles Forster, B. D., perpetual curate of Ash next Sandwich; formerly, domestic Chaplain to Bishop Jebb. In two vols. 8vo.

✓
MISCELLANEOUS.

THE HAWKS OF HAWK HOLLOW. A Tradition of Pennsylvania. By the author of "Calavar" and "The Infidel." In 2 vols. 12mo.

"We have heretofore seen the genius of Dr. Bird portraying the adventures of the Spanish conquerors, and delineating the haughty heroes of old romance; but in the Hawks of Hawk Hollow, we have men and women of every day life, in whose adventures we can lose ourselves. The mingled yarn, too, is well made up; romantic incident, sentiment, pathos, humour, and the terrific, combine in the incidents, as we feel they must combine in similar circumstances."
—*Traveller.*

THE INFIDEL, OR THE FALL OF MEXICO, a Romance. By the author of "Calavar." In 2 vols. 12mo. Second edition.

"We have read these volumes through with unwavering interest,—they evince power of a high order and thorough preparation of the work undertaken.

"They embody the very spirit of the times, in which the story is laid, and reproduce the men and the scenes as though they were living before our eyes."
—*New-York American.*

CLINTON BRADSHAW, OR THE ADVENTURES OF A LAWYER. In 2 vols. 12mo.

The New-York American thus closes a notice of Clinton Bradshaw:—"The author of Clinton Bradshaw has, we think, avoided, if we may so speak, this literary error of the day; he has had the boldness not only to describe society as it may fall within the observation of the majority of his readers, but to be natural in the description; and herein lies the peculiar charm of the work—it is so natural we think it must be true; neither is it wanting in pathos or power."

ELEMENTS OF HYGIENE. On the Influence of Atmosphere and Locality; Change of Air and Climate, Seasons, Food, Clothing, Bathing, Exercise, Sleep, Corporeal and Intellectual Pursuits, &c. on Human Health, constituting Elements of Hygiene. By ROBLEY DUNGLISSON, M. D., Professor of Materia Medica, Therapeutics, Hygiene, and Medical Jurisprudence in the University of Maryland, &c. 1 vol. 8vo.

Although this work, like the Human Physiology of the author, is intended chiefly for the professional reader, it contains matter which is important and intelligible to all: one of the author's objects, indeed, was to enable the general reader to understand the nature of the actions of various physical and moral influences on human health, and to assist him in adopting such means as may tend to its preservation.

It is a book, therefore, interesting to the general reader; and however popular and useful may have been the unrivalled work of Dr. Dewees on Children, we hazard little in predicting, that this work will be still more extensively sought and read.—*Boston Medical Magazine.*

DACRE. A Novel. 2 vols.

CHANCES AND CHANGES. A Domestic Story. In 2 vols. 12mo.

THE TWO FRIENDS. By Lady BLESSINGTON. In 2 vols. 12mo.

ANNE GREY. A Novel. 2 vols. 12mo.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MANUAL OF PHRENOLOGY, being an analytical summary of the system of Doctor Gall, on the faculties of man and the functions of the brain, with plates. 1 vol. 12mo.

A CATECHISM OF PHRENOLOGY, illustrative of the principles of that science, with a plate. From the sixth Glasgow edition. 1 vol. 12mo.

PHRENOLOGY, and the Moral Influence of Phrenology. Arranged for general study, and the purposes of education, from the first published works of Gall and Spurzheim, to the latest discoveries of the present period. By **MRS. L. MILES**.

"Man's greatest knowledge is himself to know."—*Pope*.

SLIGHT REMINISCENCES OF THE RHINE, SWITZERLAND, AND A CORNER OF ITALY. "Men should make Diaries," said a wise counsellor, and women fancy that they should do the same. In 2 vols. 12mo.

ELEGANT LIBRARY EDITIONS

OF THE FOLLOWING WORKS.

WORKS OF JOANNA BAILLIE. Complete in 1 volume 8vo.

WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING. In 2 vols. 8vo., with a portrait.

WORKS OF TOBIAS SMOLLETT. In 2 volumes 8vo., with a portrait.

THE HISTORY OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA. By **JAMES GRAHAM**. In 2 vols. 8vo.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE FUDGES IN ENGLAND; being a Sequel to the Fudge Family in Paris. In 1 vol. 18mo.

A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND: comprising recollections, sketches, and reflections made during a Tour in the East, in 1832, 1833. By ALPHONSO DE LAMARTINE. Second edition.

THE REMINISCENCES OF NIEBUHR, THE HISTORIAN OF ROME. By the author of "Stranger in America," &c. 1 vol. 12mo.

THE YOUNG WIFE'S BOOK; a Manual of Religious, Moral, and Domestic Duties. A small volume, bound in extra, with plates engraved on steel.

"This book has a most attractive title; and the title is justified by the contents, which embrace numerous lessons of expediency as well as duty for the conjugal state. All single ladies who have not turned the corner of hope, (at which, we trust, indeed, none ever arrive) will find here a great deal to learn by anticipation; and all who have blessed our sex by union, much which experience and reflection will sanction as both obligatory and politic."—*Nat. Gazette.*

THE POETRY OF LIFE. By SARAH STICKNEY. In 2 vols. 12mo.

"To the lover of nervous, polished and beautiful composition; the admirers of genius, and those who have a true relish for the beauties of nature, and the world of fiction, through which poets delight to revel, these volumes will afford a rich intellectual banquet."—*Saturday Courier.*

"The whole work is excellent."—*National Gazette.*

A JOURNAL. By FRANCES ANNE BUTLER. In 2 vols. 12mo.

SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HINDOSTAN, with Sketches of Anglo-Indian Society. By EMMA ROBERTS. 2 vols. 12mo.

"Take them up at any time, open them at any page, and you cannot fail of being instructed—amused—or perhaps both. They are totally devoid of pretension, and yet they contain a large store of information."—*New Monthly.*

IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA during the years 1833, 1834, and 1835. By TYRONE POWER, Esq. 2 vols. 12mo.

PENCILLINGS BY THE WAY. By N. P. WILLIS, Esq. 2 vols. 12mo.

THE YOUTH'S BOOK OF THE SEASONS; or, Nature familiarly developed. With numerous wood cuts.

"We propose to converse with our young readers in a familiar and confidential style; to take our way with them through many pleasant paths and shady nooks by the still waters of the valley, and over the steep mountain top, to point out the fair works of the Creator to their grateful admiration, and to draw many delightful and useful lessons from his wonderful and beneficent arrangement of the varying seasons."—*Extract from the Preface.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

THIRTY YEARS' CORRESPONDENCE, between JOHN JEBB, D. D., F. R. S., Bishop of Limerick, Ardfert, and Ag-hadoe, and ALEXANDER KNOX, Esq. M. R. J. A., edited by the Rev. Charles Forster, B. D., Perpetual Curate of Ash next Sandwich, formerly domestic chaplain to Bishop Jebb. In 2 vols. 8vo.

"It would be very difficult to imagine a more beautiful picture of truly christian friendship, and truly christian intercourse, than these two volumes present. The Bishop of Limerick and Mr. A. Knox, were both of them persons of high attainments in literature, and of the deepest and most sacred piety. Their correspondence was such as became such men. The important and delightful subjects of literature and philosophy, are handled and discussed with great ability, but the main subject is the far higher one of vital christianity. They are volumes from which every clergyman may derive stores of valuable instruction, as well as high enjoyment."—*British Mag.*

"This is no ordinary correspondence, although the epistolary freedom of the style, and the entire absence of reserve which characterize, throughout, the interchange of thought between the two friends, preclude the suspicion that the correspondence was concluded with any view to meet the public eye; the letters on both sides exhibit all the accuracy of finished compositions, and from the learned criticisms and materials for thinking with which they abound, possess an intrinsic value, independent of the peculiar interest which will attach to them on the minds of all who knew and admired the parties."—*Eclectic Review.*

MEPHISTOPHELES IN ENGLAND. 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ **CANVASSING.** A Tale. By JOHN BANIM. 1 vol. 12mo.

A TWELVE MONTHS' RESIDENCE IN THE WEST INDIES, during the transition from Slavery to Apprenticeship, with incidental notices of the state of society, prospects, and natural resources of Jamaica and other islands. By R. R. MADDEN, M. D. author of "Travels in the East," &c. 2 vols. 12mo.

INDIAN-SKETCH-BOOK. Indian Sketches taken during an Expedition to the Pawnee Tribes. By JOHN T. IRVING, JUN. 2 vols. 12mo.

"Possessed of a cool and discriminating judgment, a rich and glowing fancy, and a quick perception of the ludicrous, the author has presented in these two volumes a narrative of spirit-stirring adventure, and of comic incident, which cannot fail to interest, instruct and amuse."—*N. Y. Paper.*

THE CONQUEST OF FLORIDA, by Hernando de Soto. By THEODORE IRVING. In 2 vols. 12mo.

"The author of this production is Theodore Irving, the nephew of Washington Irving—and he has performed his task with ability, and imparted a highly attractive interest to a narrative of peril and adventure, amid the almost trackless wilds and morasses of what now constitutes the Territory of Florida, and the States of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, in which Spanish chivalry was compelled to subdue the Indian fierceness which it strove in vain to conciliate."—*Charleston Courier.*

BECKFORD'S RECOLLECTIONS of an Excursion to the Monasteries of Alcobaca and Batalha. 1 vol. 12mo.

"This is another of Beckford's delightful volumes, as fresh and as graphic as ever."—*London Lit. Gazette.*

Cooper's New Novel.

✓ **THE HEADSMAN,**

A New Novel, by the Author of the Spy, Pilot, &c. In 2 vols. 12mo.

THE PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THEODORE HOOK, AUTHOR OF SAYINGS AND DOINGS, &c.

IN 2 VOLS. 12mo.

"We proceed to assure the reader, who has it before him, that he will enjoy an intellectual treat of no mean order. The principal feature of its excellence is an all-engrossing interest, which interest is mainly attributable to the extreme vraisemblance of its incidents, and the fidelity with which each character supports its individuality. In it there is as much invention and originality as we have ever met with in a modern novel, be the author who he may."—*Metropolitan*.

"The moral of the tale carries conviction as to the justness of its applicability, and the incidents flow as naturally as the stream of events in everyday life."—*Ibid*.

"Here is a novel from a deservedly popular author, written with great ease and sprightliness."—*Athenaeum*.

✓ **SWALLOW BARN.**

OR, A SOJOURN IN THE OLD DOMINION.

In 2 vols. 12mo.

"We cannot but predict a warm reception of this work among all persons who have not lost their relish for nature and probability, as well as all those who can properly estimate the beauties of simplicity in thought and expression."—*New York Mirror*.

"One of the cleverest of the last publications written on this or the other side of the Atlantic."—*New York Courier and Enquirer*.

"The style is admirable, and the sketches of character, men, and scenery, so fresh and agreeable, that we cannot help feeling that they are drawn from nature."

✓ **THE DOMINIE'S LEGACY,**

Consisting of a Series of Tales illustrative of the Scenery and Manners of Scotland. In 2 vols. 12mo.

"These pages are pictures from scenes whose impress of truth tells that the author has taken them as an eye-witness; and many are rich in quiet, simple pathos, which is evidently his forte."—*Literary Gazette*.

✓ **GALE MIDDLETON, A Novel,** by HORACE SMITH, Author of *Brambletye House*, &c. In 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ **TREVALYAN, A Novel,** by the Author of *Marriage in High Life*. In 2 vols.

New Works, published by Carey, Lea, & Blanchard.

NIMROD'S HUNTING TOURS. In 2 vols. 12mo.

THE EARLY NAVAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.—

By ROBERT SOUTHEY. In 1 vol. 12mo.

"It is full of excitement and traits of character, and possesses, with all the charms of personal adventure, the grave attributes of historical narrative."—*Atlas*.

"Admirably written, with great accuracy of fact, extent of research, neatness and simplicity of style, warm patriotic feeling, and some moral and religious sentiment."—*Gentleman's Magazine*.

"Clear, well arranged, perspicuous and interesting."—*Literary Gazette*.

THE DISTRICT SCHOOL, OR NATIONAL EDUCATION. By J. ORVILLE TAYLOR. The third edition.

"The style of the 'District School' is simple, intelligible, appropriate, correct, and forcible; and the author displays much acquaintance with the condition of common education. We regard the general circulation of this work as highly desirable, for it will carry to every reader a large amount of important truths, many sound views of education, and an incitement to exertion in its promotion, which must produce some good effects."—*New-York Daily Advertiser*.

A DISCOURSE ON NATURAL THEOLOGY. By HENRY LORD BROUGHAM. 1 vol. 12mo.

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

THOUGHTS IN VERSE FOR SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."—Isaiah xxx. 15.

First American from the 25th London edition, with an introduction and notes by Bishop Doane, of New Jersey. In a handsome vol.

"It may be read for purposes of devotion by Christians of whatever denomination, with pleasure and profit."—*Christian Watchman*.

"These verses were singularly beautiful in conception and composition, and breathe the purest poetic taste and the most sincere and fervent spirit of piety."—*Gazette*.

"The work should be in the hands of all who value taste, genius and piety."—*Com. Intelligencer*.

"We have rarely, perhaps never, met a poetical volume, more appropriate to family devotion."—*U. S. Gazette*.

"As a book for family reading—whether as an exercise of taste or devotion—we know of few that can surpass it."—*Gazette*.

A few copies have been bound in beautiful embossed leather, with gilt edges, making a very desirable volume for a present.

A GUIDE TO AN IRISH GENTLEMAN IN HIS SEARCH FOR A RELIGION.

By the Rev. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN, A. M.

1 vol. 12mo. Being an answer to Moore's work.

PENCIL SKETCHES,

OR OUTLINES OF CHARACTER AND MANNERS.

BY MISS LESLIE.

"Look here upon this picture, and on this."—*Shakespeare*.

In 2 vols. 12mo.

TALES AND SKETCHES. By the author of "Linwoods,"
"Redwood," &c. 1 vol. 12mo.

Contents.

A Reminiscence of Federalism.
The Catholic Iroquois.
The Country Cousin.
Old Maids.
The Chivalric Sailor.
The Canary Family.

Mary Dyre.
Cacoethes Scribendi.
The Eldest Sister.
St. Catherine's Eve.
Romance in Real Life.

"We recognise in Miss Sedgwick, a moralist of power. She brings to her lessons the attractions which secure attention and insure profit. This collection of Tales and Sketches is exceedingly interesting, and will add to the rich harvest of fame which is ripening for the fair writer."—*Gazette*.

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE-DAME.

BY VICTOR HUGO.

With a Sketch of the Life and Writings of the Author, by
Frederick Shoberl. In 2 vols. 12mo.

"Victor Hugo is a most powerful writer—a man of splendid genius, and gigantic grasp of mind."—*Court Journal*.

ROOKWOOD—A ROMANCE.

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.

From the second London edition. In 2 vols. 12mo.

"This is one of the most spirited and romantic of 'the season's' production. Full of life and fire, it excites the reader and carries him onward—much as the true heroine of the tale, the mare Black Bess, does the true hero of it, the ROBBER TURPIN—with mingled sensations of terror and delight. It is a wild story, told with exceeding skill, and wrought up to the highest pitch of which so singular a subject is capable.—The book is an excellent one, and the author may take a high station among the romance writers of our time."—*New Monthly Magazine*.

VATHEK.—AN ORIENTAL TALE.

BY MR. BECKFORD, AUTHOR OF ITALY, &c.

"A very remarkable performance. It continues in possession of all the celebrity it once commanded."—*Quarterly Review*, 1834.

New Works, published by Carey, Lea, & Blanchard.

THE MAGDALEN AND OTHER TALES.

By SHERIDAN KNOWLES, Author of *The Wife, Hunchback, &c.*

In 1 volume, 18mo.

THE INSURGENTS.

An Historical Tale. In 2 volumes, 12mo.

JULIAN FARQUHARSON, OR THE CONFESSIONS OF A POET

In 2 volumes, 12mo.

HORSE-SHOE ROBINSON.

A TALE OF THE TORY ASCENDENCY,

BY THE AUTHOR OF *SWALLOW BARN*. IN 2 VOLS. 12mo.

AURUNGZEBE;

A TALE OF ALRASCHID.

An Eastern Tale. In 2 volumes 12mo.

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

BY SOPHIA AND HARRIET LEE.

"There are fine things in the 'The Canterbury Tales.' Nothing of Scott's is finer than 'The German Tale.' I admired it when a boy, and have continued to like what I did then. This, I remember, particularly affected me."
—Lord Byron.

"To read the *Canterbury Tales* of the Misses Lee once more, is a species of temporary regeneration. There is scarcely any educated person of this century who has not, at some time or other, of youth, drawn a sincere pleasure from these pages. The different tales have been to many like turning down a leaf in life; we can find our place again in juvenile existence by the associations connected with them. The Officer's Tale, perhaps, was read on some sunny bank in a pleasant land—a stolen pleasure. The Young Lady's Tale unfolded all its intricacy on some fair sofa of a well-remembered apartment. On the German Tale, perhaps, two hearts beat in unison, trembled in harmony, and, when sharing a mutual agitation, two heads bent over the mystic page, they turned round to see each other's fright reflected in well-known and well-loved features. Even now we feel a shiver running over the frame, as we call to mind the fearful whisper of the name of Kruitzaer, amidst the silent throng of a kneeling congregation in the cathedral. Such a *memoria technica* has its charm; and we may be pardoned for approaching this number of 'The Standard Novels' with feelings of far more interest than we take up any new novel of the day."—*Spectator*.

THE MAYOR OF WIND GAP.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE O'HARA TALES.

MY COUSIN NICHOLAS. 2 Vols.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MEN AND MANNERS IN AMERICA. By Major HAMILTON, author of *Cyril Thornton*, &c. 2 vols. 12mo.

CHITTY'S MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE. A valuable work for Lawyers or Physicians. In royal 8vo.

THE COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF JOANNA BAILLIE. 1 vol. 8vo.

This edition corresponds with the Library Editions of Byron, Scott, Moore, &c. "Miss Baillie's Plays on the Passions have been long known as among the best in the language. No one who reads them can entertain a doubt of the character of the writer's affections. Such works could never have been dictated by a cold heart."—*Christian Examiner*.

"We are among the most earnest admirers of her genius, her literary attainments and skill, her diction, her success, her moral designs, and her personal worth. Some of her tragedies have deservedly passed into the stock of the principal British and American theatres. They are express developments and delineations of the passions, marked by a deep insight into human nature, great dramatic power of treatment, a fertile spirit of poetry, and the loftiest and purest moral sentiment."—*National Gazette*.

TREATISE ON CLOCK AND WATCHMAKING, Theoretical and Practical. By THOMAS REID, Edinburgh Honorary Member of the Worshipful Company of Clock-Makers, London. Royal 8vo. Illustrated by numerous Plates.

GEOLOGICAL MANUAL. By H. T. DE LA BECHE. In 8vo. with numerous wood-cuts.

"A work of first-rate importance in the science to which it relates, and which must henceforth take its place in the library of every student in Geology."—*Phil. Magazine*.

"Mr. De la Beche's Geological Manual is the first and best work of the kind, and he has performed his task with a perfect knowledge of all that has been ascertained in Geology, and with considerable judgment and taste in the manner of doing it. So much geological science was never before compressed in so small a space."—*Spectator*.

HISTORY OF ENGLAND, by SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH. Octavo edition.

. The first volume of this edition will contain the same matter as the first three volumes of the 18mo. edition.

A COLLECTION OF COLLOQUIAL PHRASES, on every subject necessary to maintain Conversation, the whole so disposed as considerably to facilitate the acquisition of the Italian language. By an Italian Gentleman. 1 vol. 18mo.

NOVELLE ITALIANE.—Stories from Italian Writers, with a literal, interlinear translation on Locke's plan of Classical Instruction, illustrated with Notes. First American from the last London edition, with additional translations and notes.

New Works, published by Carey, Lea, & Blanchard.

LITTERATURE FRANCAISE.

BIBLIOTHEQUE CHOISIE DE LITTERATURE FRANCAISE.

SELECT LIBRARY

OF

MODERN FRENCH LITERATURE.

In 4 volumes, 12mo: containing—

LES ECORCHEURS.

CINQ MARS.

PARIS ET LES PARISIENS.

MEMOIRES D'UN APOTHECAIRE.

HEURES DU SOIR,

LES ENFANS D'EDOUARD.

MINUIT ET MIDE, &c. &c.

Some of these works may be had separately.

THE DOOMED.

A NOVEL. In two volumes, 12mo.

BY MR. COOPER.

✓ THE BRAVO. By the Author of the SPY, PILOT, &c. In 2 vols.

✓ THE WATER-WITCH, OR THE SKIMMER OF THE SEAS.

✓ THE HEADSMAN, OR THE ABBAYE DES VIGNERONS.
In 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE HEIDENMAUER; OR THE BENEDICTINES. In 2 vols.

✓ THE MONIKINS. Edited by the author of "The Spy," &c.
2 vols. 12mo.

✓ NOTIONS OF THE AMERICANS, by a Travelling Bachelor,
2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE WEPT OF WISH-TON-WISH, 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE RED ROVER, 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE SPY, 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE PIONEERS, 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE PILOT, a Tale of the Sea, 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ LIONEL LINCOLN, OR THE LEAGUER OF BOSTON, 2 vols.

✓ THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS, 2 vols. 12mo.

✓ THE PRAIRIE, 2 vols. 12mo.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

A HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND VOYAGES OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND COMPANIONS. A new edition, revised and corrected by the author. In three vols. 8vo.

THE CRAYON MISCELLANY, to be published at intervals—
now ready.

Part 1.—A Tour on the Prairies.

Part 2.—Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey.

Part 3.—Legends of the conquest of Spain.

THE BEAUTIES OF WASHINGTON IRVING; a small
vol. for the pocket, neatly done up in extra cloth.

A CHRONICLE OF THE CONQUEST OF GRENADA. By
WASHINGTON IRVING, Esq. In 2 vols.

"On the whole, this work will sustain the high fame of Washington Irving. It fills a blank in the historical library which ought not to have remained so long a blank. The language throughout is at once chaste and animated; and the narrative may be said, like Spenser's Fairy Queen, to present one long gallery of splendid pictures."—*Lond. Lit. Gazette*.

THE ALHAMBRA; a Series of Tales and Sketches of the
Moors and Spaniards. By the author of the Sketch-Book. In
2 vols.

"We have read a part of Washington Irving's new *Sketch-Book*, the scene of which is in Spain, the most romantic of European countries, and the best known by the gifted author. His style has lost nothing of its peculiar charm—his descriptions are as graphic as usual, and enlivened with racy anecdotes and happy reflection. We shall probably soon furnish a specimen of this work, from the whole of which we expect gratification."—*Nat. Gazette*.

New Editions of the following Works by the same Author.

THE SKETCH BOOK, 2 vols. 12mo.

KNICKERBOCKER'S HISTORY OF NEW YORK, revised
and corrected. 2 vols.

BRACEBRIDGE HALL, OR THE HUMORISTS, 2 vols. 12mo.

TALES OF A TRAVELLER, 2 vols. 12mo.

This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

Please return promptly.

